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AUTHOR Banathy, Bela H.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This document is one of a set of four documents which present a personnel development program aimed at improving the competence of instructional leaders in planning and implementing curricula in generic work skills, especially in vocational education. (Generic work skills are defined as those skills that facilitate the operation of goal-oriented groups involved in the accomplishment of specific tasks that require cooperative interaction among the members of the group. Divided into two parts, this document contains a learning module which presents the foundation curriculum of the Instructional Leadership Development Program (ILD). A brief introduction provides an overview of the module and definitions of key terms. Part one presents background information and theory concerning human groups, including descriptions of different types of groups, how groups function, and leadership within groups. An application exercise on group analysis is included at the end of part one. Part two presents background information and theory concerning generic work skills, including identification and assessment of generic work skills, and the definition and description of related competencies. An application exercise concerning generic work skills is included at the end of part two. References and related materials are appended. (BM)

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INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP Development for Generic Work Skills Curriculum

MODULE 1: FOUNDATIONS

Bela H. Banathy

Nancy Banker

Adebisi Aromolaran

Carl Slawski

Diana Studebaker

Vicki Tiernan

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1855 FOLSOM STREET · SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94103 · (415) 565-3000

CE 022 488

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PREFACE

Supported by a grant from the Vocational Education Research Program of the Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education of the U.S. Office of Education, the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development designed, developed, and pilot-tested a personnel development program aimed at improving the competence of instructional leaders in planning and implementing curricula in generic work skills.

This project used a research curriculum called INTERACTION,* which was developed by the Far West Laboratory in 1975,** as a foundation for the personnel development program. The INTERACTION curriculum was designed to help high school students to learn cooperative group interaction skills in small task-oriented groups, in order to prepare them to make healthy adjustments to the requirements of most job settings.

The research curriculum facilitates the development of competence in: (1) communicating effectively; (2) identifying and utilizing group resources; (3) resolving conflicts; (4) planning to accomplish and to carry out tasks; (5) evaluating individual and group performance; (6) sharing leadership/membership responsibilities; (7) making group decisions; and (8) cooperating with group members.

The curriculum was pilot-tested in urban, suburban, and rural settings; in large and small schools; with academically motivated students and with

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*B.H. Banathy et al., INTERACTION: Learning Leadership/Membership Skills (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development), 1976.

**B.H. Banathy et al., The Effects of Learned Leadership/Membership Skills on Work Performance: Final Report (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development), 1976.

underachievers; and in vocational, experimental, and academic classes. Pilot test findings clearly indicated that in all settings the value and effectiveness of the curriculum is greatly enhanced (1) if the teacher has had previous training in generic work skills, and (2) if the teacher is competent in planning and implementing curricula in generic work skills.

The Instructional Leadership Development rogram responded to the need outlined above. Accordingly, the project staff at the Far West Laboratory:

- designed a model of, and specifications for, a professional development program for instructional leadership in generic work skills curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation;
- developed training materials and procedures (based on the model) that enable educators to acquire competence in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of curricula and instructional programs in generic work skills; and
- pilot tested the program in a variety of professional development settings.

The products developed by the project include: an Orientation Guide; A Model for an Instructional Leadership Development Program in Generic Work Skills Curriculum; Foundations, a curriculum content module; Curriculum Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation, a curriculum management module; and a Final Report.

An essential aspect of the project was the involvement of educational practitioners in the research and development process. This was accomplished through cooperative arrangements with institutes of higher education and participating school districts.

In this Guide we: (a) introduce a rationale and purpose of the Instructional Leadership Development (ILD) program in Generic Work Skills; (b) characterize the program; and (c) describe the program resources produced by the Far West Laboratory that can be used to implement an Instructional Leadership Development Program.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Instructional Leadership Development (ILD) Program in Generic Work Skills (GWS) Curriculum is to assist educators--primarily vocational educators--in planning, implementing, and managing generic work skills curricula and instruction. The ILD program may be used by small groups of educators in a self-directive mode or as part of an inservice/preservice professional development program.

The complete set of program resources includes:

- *Orientation Guide* - designed to introduce the program;
- *A Model for an Instructional Leadership Development Program in Generic Work Skills Curriculum* - a description of the training program;
- Instructional Leadership Development Module #1: *Foundations* - a professional development module that provides teachers with the basic theories and knowledge upon which the concept of a generic work skills curriculum was developed;
- Instructional Leadership Development Module #2: *Curriculum Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation* - a professional development module on how to plan, implement, and evaluate a generic work skills curriculum; and
- *INTERACTION* - a cooperative group interaction skills (generic work skills) curriculum for students. (explained next)

The INTERACTION curriculum was designed by the Far West Laboratory in 1975 for use by high school students in learning how to interact effectively and act cooperatively in small, task-oriented groups. Because the skills are not content-bound and are almost universally required at the work place, they are also called generic work skills. It is assumed that the user of the two professional development modules has studied INTERACTION.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM MODEL AND THIS MODULE

Section V of A Model for an Instructional Leadership Development Program in Generic Work Skills Curriculum sets forth specifications for instructional resource materials for Generic Work Skills (GWS) curriculum content. More specifically, it sets forth specifications for this module.

From any set of curriculum specifications, a number of alternative instructional/training programs can be developed. The module presented here was derived from the curriculum specifications, but it only exemplifies and partly represents those specifications; it does not fully implement them.

Furthermore, the module in its present state should be considered to be a first cut--pilot form--of an instructional resource material to be used in an Instructional Leadership Development Program in Generic Work Skills. It invites further "try-out" testing and revision based on that testing.

GROUP THEORY, GROUP SKILLS: THEIR SIGNIFICANCE AND USEFULNESS

The central concept of the model presented here is that a basis for the functioning of all social and economic systems is cooperation. Cooperation can be defined as the coordinated, interdependent effort to accomplish mutually-desired and agreed-upon goals. That cooperation is a biological, ecological, anthropological, economic, sociological, and psychological necessity for humans. There is a deep human need within all people to respond to others, and to work jointly with them toward mutually agreed-upon ends.

Furthermore, the quality of life in our society depends in part on the success of economic organizations and on the maintenance of a cooperative network of exchange of products and services. Our economic system is based on a cooperative division of labor in which different organizations specialize

in different activities. Within each organization, there is a division of labor, also based on cooperation, in which persons specialize and contribute their efforts to achieve specific goals. The success of each economic organization, therefore, depends upon the cooperative skills and attitudes--the generic work skills--of its members.[1] These skills include:

- communicating effectively with others;
- recognizing and using the resources of the group;
- resolving conflicts;
- planning with others to accomplish a joint task;
- assuming and sharing leadership as appropriate;
- making group decisions and solving group problems;
- building and maintaining empathic relationships, motivating others in the group, and learning to work cooperatively with them; and
- evaluating your own and the group's performance.

Vocational education teachers, by the nature of their profession, are more responsible than others for the preparation of young people to enter and contribute to our economic system. Traditionally, service areas in vocational education were often viewed as unrelated, disjointed studies, each of which called for a set of separate and distinct vocational skills. Students were taught to think of themselves as "secretaries" or "mechanics" --persons who would have a certain specified role or who would perform a particular, relatively narrow function in the world of work. At the same time, vocational education teachers were trained to think of themselves as

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[1] The competencies described in this module are referred to as "generic work skills." In INTERACTION the same competencies are referred to as "cooperative group interaction skills." The distinction is related to the fact that this module focuses on the application of the competencies specifically within a work setting and on their particular appropriateness and significance in work groups.

"teachers" whose primary role and responsibility was to help students master a skilled craft in a selective service area.

However, the interdependence of individual members and organizations of our society is increasing. The set of problems, issues and social conditions that are making the need for cooperative action more urgent includes:

- the growing energy crisis;
- concern for the quality of the environment;
- unemployment and underemployment;
- shortages of skilled workers, and the development of new occupations;
- rising inflation;
- growing consumer awareness and increasing demands for accountability; and
- expanded concern for and claims by minorities, women, the handicapped, and the disadvantaged.

Because of the many ongoing changes in the present social fabric, and the uncertainty of what the future will bring, there is an ever-increasing need for the development of professional personnel who can adjust, modify, or redirect vocational education according to the demands of rapidly changing conditions.

> Because the vocational teacher education program finds itself as an inadvertent gatekeeper in the improvement and redirection of vocational education, it must be sensitive and responsive to the needs and directions in occupational education as it serves social and individual needs. The total vocational education program must be capable of regeneration and self-renewal. This can be accomplished by a systematic program of leadership personnel development which includes teacher education.[2]

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[2]Robert E. Taylor and Aaron J. Miller, "The Content of Vocational Teacher Education," Changing the Role of Vocational Teacher Education (Bloomington, IL; McKnight and McKnight Publishing Co.), 1971.

In essence, teachers are leaders; vocational education teachers are leaders who guide students into the world of work. If they are to provide good examples as well as effective instruction in generic work skills, vocational education teachers must understand those skills and use them expertly. In order to do this, teachers must study and practice generic work skills before they can use them with and teach them to their students. The resource materials of the Instructional Leadership Development Program (of which this module is a part) can serve as a guide to enable teachers to learn and practice their own generic work skills, as well as to teach their students to do so.

This module is entitled Foundations because it provides an overview of the information knowledge base upon which the generic work skills curriculum was developed.

MODULE OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Foundations module is (1) to provide you with an understanding of the theoretical basis for the Generic Work Skills curriculum (as well as for this teacher training module); and (2) to help you assess and build your own generic work skills. Thus, as a result of completing this module you will be able to:

- identify the major types and characteristics of groups;
- describe how groups function in the performance of tasks;
- be cognizant of leadership roles or styles of influence within groups;
- identify and define competencies needed for effective group work;
- assess your own skill level; and
- expand your generic work skills.

Figure 1 (page xi) is a map of the content and objectives of this module. It depicts the content flow and the relationships between content and objectives.

There are two major sections of the module: (1) HUMAN GROUPS; and (2) GENERIC WORK SKILLS. Each section is organized so that you are first provided with theoretical information about the content of the section, and you are then asked to supplement that information with what you have learned from your own experience. In the process, you are asked to analyze that experience.

A list of suggested reading, which contains some annotations, is provided at the end of the module. Also included in the module is a BIBLIOGRAPHY, which is more extensive than the suggested reading list, and a list of KEY TERMS (page xii).

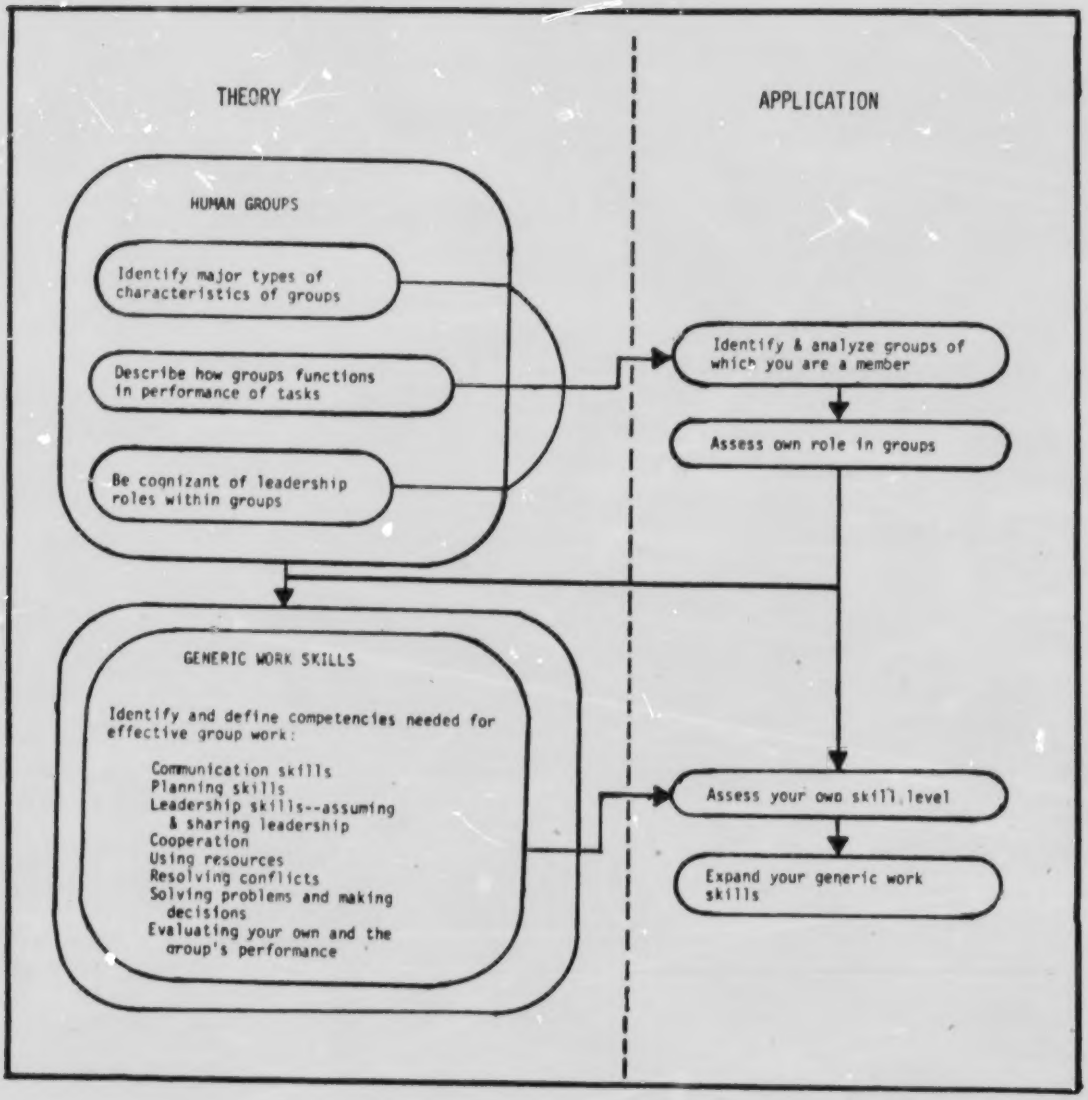
THEORY
APPLICATION
HUMAN GROUPS
Identify major types of characteristics of groups
Describe how groups functions in performance of tasks
Be cognizant of leadership roles within groups
Identify & analyze groups of which you are a member
Assess own role in groups
GENERIC WORK SKILLS
Identify and define competencies needed for effective group work:
Communication skills
Planning skills
Leadership skills--assuming & sharing leadership
Cooperation
Using resources
Resolving conflicts
Solving problems and making decisions
Evaluating your own and the group's performance
Assess your own skill level
Expand your generic work skills

Figure 1:

MODULE CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES

KEY TERMS

- *Instructional Leadership Development (ILD)*: refers to the professional development of educational personnel who are (or might be) involved in planning, designing, implementing, managing, and evaluating instructional/learning experiences in the domain of generic work skills.

- *Generic Work Skills (GWS)*: refers to one set of skills in the generic work skills domain, namely those skills that facilitate the operation of goal-oriented groups involved in the accomplishment of specific tasks that require cooperative interaction among members of the group.

- *Model*: (a) an abstract representation of reality, or (b) an organized expression of a mental image. This image can be described, depicted, or otherwise displayed. Such a description can then be used to make the model real. In this work, the term model is used in the sense of a mental image--the image of an Instructional Leadership Development program in Generic Work Skills. The model document also outlines specifications for the components of the program and for the relationships among the various components. The model and specifications became the basis upon which a training program was developed and adapted to fit into a variety of institutional settings and implementation modes.

- *Curriculum Content Module*: an instructional resource to be used in implementing an Instructional Leadership Development program in Generic Work Skills that introduces: (a) the knowledge base for generic work skills; (b) a description of the content that can be used to introduce generic work skills curriculum and instruction; and (c) the specification of generic work skills competencies.

- *Curriculum Management Module*: an instructional resource that can be used to implement an Instructional Leadership Development program in Generic Work Skills that introduces arrangements and procedures for the purposing, planning, implementing, and evaluating of generic work skills curriculum and instruction.

PART ONE:
HUMAN GROUPS

NAME YOUR GROUPS

Whether you are a highly social person or generally prefer to keep to yourself and lead a private, solitary life, you are a member of several groups. To what groups do you belong? What are their purposes? How do they function? On a separate sheet of paper, list every group in which you hold membership. Include your family, your school faculty, committees, the National Association of Vocational Educators, your state and local chapters, community service organizations (Kiwanis, Scouts, Big Brother, YWCA), parent organizations (PTA, Parents Without Partners, Babysitting Coop), religious affiliations, unions, professional associations, car pool, recreational and athletic organizations (Sierra Club, swim club, tennis club, square dance group), and any other group to which you belong. Then, using at least one sheet of paper per group, select three to five groups from your list and provide the following information for each:

- size of the group;
- its purpose and goals;
- the nature of your participation (active, inactive, officer, founder);
- whether the group is formal or informal (Have the roles of members been officially established? Do all members recognize those roles and act accordingly?);
- the tasks the group is trying to accomplish;
- the functions that must be carried out in order to accomplish those tasks;

NAME YOUR GROUPS (continued)

- the individual(s) in the group who assume those functions (Does one person repeatedly fulfill the same functions or do various members take that responsibility depending upon the situation?);
- whether the group accomplishes its goals; the kinds of problems it encounters; their causes (lack of interest on the part of some members, unwillingness to assume responsibility, differences of agreement about group goals, misunderstanding of tasks to be carried out);
- the changes you would like to see in the structure, goals, membership, or functions of the group; and
- the skills or knowledge you think you need in order to bring about those changes.

Save these sheets. You will be reviewing them later in the module.

HUMAN GROUPS

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

Although different social scientists define groups in somewhat different ways, basically they agree that a group is a collection of individuals who have a common sense of relatedness and who share a common purpose. Groups are capable of doing things an individual cannot do. They can manufacture thousands of pairs of shoes a week. They can build freeways and skyscrapers. They can provide a broad perspective of the world and of life in it. They can combine their resources and knowledge to solve problems, to create and build, and to carry out tasks an individual does not have the skill or know-how to do.

This section of the module will increase your awareness of the many different kinds of groups to which we belong, the purposes of groups, their characteristics, and their mode of functioning in the accomplishment of a task. It will help you to examine more closely the groups to which you belong; it will make you a more productive and influential group member; and it will enable you to increase the effectiveness of your groups. Most importantly, it will make you a keener observer of groups, and thus a better facilitator of group interaction--an indispensible tool for teaching your students cooperative group interaction or "generic work" skills.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

Definition of Group and Small Group

It has been observed that groups possess certain qualities or traits that reflect their organization as well as the perceptions members have of themselves, of other members, and of the group as a whole. These qualities or characteristics are used to describe and classify groups.

One could easily become lost in the multitude of definitions of the terms "group" and "small group." The most direct is that of Albion Small, who is considered one of the founders of American sociology.[3] According to Small, "the term 'group' serves as a convenient sociological designation for any number of people, large or small, between whom such relations are discovered that they must be thought of together...a number of persons whose relations to each other are sufficiently impressive to demand attention."[4]

In this module a group is distinguished from an aggregate or class, as well as from a collectivity. A social aggregate is a number of people who have a common characteristic such as age, sex, race, or social ranking. A collectivity has a degree of social organization associated with it and a common focus of attention. It is composed of "people who have a sense of

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[3]Michael Olmstead, The Small Group (New York: Random House), 1959, pp. 20-21.

[4]Albion W. Small, General Sociology (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1905, p. 495.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

solidarity by virtue of sharing common values and who have acquired an attendant sense of moral obligation to fulfill role expectations."[5] These include the crowd, the public, and the social movement.

A true group may be redefined now as "a plurality of individuals who are in contact with one another, who take one another into account, and who are aware of some significant commonality."[6] Somewhat more formally, Merton characterizes a group in terms of three criteria: (1) it comprises a number of individuals who interact with one another on the basis of established patterns; (2) the persons who interact define themselves as group members; and (3) these persons are defined by others (both fellow members and nonmembers) as members of the group.[7]

Many subtypes of groups could be distinguished. For example, Jennings suggested that groups composed of persons who have sought and maintained membership primarily because they are interested in the goals of the group should be called socio-groups; groups composed of persons who are in the group mainly because they are attracted to the other members should be labeled psyche-groups.[8]

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[5]Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, rev. ed. (Glencoe, IL: Free Press), 1957. p. 299.

[6]Olmstead, The Small Group, p. 21

[7]Merton, Social Theory, p. 299.

[8]H.H. Jennings, Leadership and Isolation, 2nd ed. (NY: Longmans, Green), 1950, as reported in J.H. Davis, Group Performance (Reading, MA: Addison Wesley), 1969.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

Another useful distinction is that between a "membership-group" (the group to which someone actually belongs) and a "reference group" (the group which someone employs as a basis of comparison for self-appraisal).[9] A more refined definition of "reference group" is that of Shibutani: "that group whose outlook is used by the actor as the frame of reference in the organization of his perceptual field."[10] He goes on to indicate that reference groups "arise through the internalization of norms; they constitute the structure of expectations imputed to some audience for whom one organizes his conduct."[11]

When we speak of reference groups, we ordinarily refer to groups of which we are not actually members. Usually we do more than merely compare our norms to these groups; we also identify and take (or reinforce) our norms from these groups. The latter are called "normative" reference groups. If we merely compare our norms to them, they are called "comparative" reference groups. Our identification with the reference group may be either positive or negative. That is, we may agree or disagree with the norms and values of our reference groups. It is usually easier to pick out which groups are our negative reference groups than it is to pick out our positive reference groups.

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[9] H.H. Hyman, "The Psychology of Status," Archives of Psychology, No. 269, 1942.

[10] Tamotsu Shibutani, "Reference Groups as Perspectives," American Journal of Sociology (1955), 60:562-569.

[11] Shibutani, "Reference Groups," 562-569.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

Still another distinction that is very useful in gaining a handle on small groups is that between primary groups and secondary or task groups. A simple definition of the primary group is that of Dunphy: "(It is) a small group which persists long enough to develop strong emotional attachments between members, at least a set of rudimentary, functionally differentiated roles, and a subculture of its own which includes both an image of the group as an entity and an informal normative system which controls group-relevant action of members."[12]

Dunphy identified four general classes of groups that met his defining criteria for primary groups:

1. families
2. free association peer groups of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood--including delinquent gangs and some small, cohesive, political elites ("cabals")
3. informal groups existing in organizational settings such as classroom groups, factory work groups, small military units, and "house churches"
4. resocialization groups such as therapy groups, rehabilitation groups, and self-analytic groups

The secondary group is defined as having characteristics opposite or complementary to those of the primary group. Olmstead indicates that in secondary groups

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[12] Dexter Dunphy, The Primary Group: A Handbook for Analysis and Field Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts), 1972, p. 5.

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> relations among members are "cool," impersonal, rational contractual, and formal. People participate not as whole personalities but only in delimited and special capacities; the group is not an end in itself but a means to other ends. Secondary groups are typically large and members have usually only intermittent contacts, often indirectly through the written rather than the spoken word. Examples range from the professional association to the large bureaucratic corporation to the national state itself.[13]

Secondary group is a catchall term that has useful connotations. Nixon prefers the term "task group," which eliminates the ambiguity. He sees a continuum running from primary groups to task groups.[14]

> Closest to the primary group end, we would expect to find families, peer groups, and informal groups in organizations. Then we would expect to find resocialization groups, which are more explicitly oriented than other types of primary groups to the attainment of socialization as a goal of group activities, but which tend to have a more diffuse orientation to task performance than task groups. Farthest from the primary group end, we would expect to find task-performing groups oriented to tasks other than socialization.[15]

As a testimony to the value of studying small groups, Nixon points out that

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[13] Michael Olmstead, The Small Group, pp. 18-19.

[14] Howard L. Nixon, II, The Small Group (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall), 1979.

[15] Nixon, The Small Group, p. 19.

> as members of small groups, (1) we learn who we are and how we are expected to act; (2) we experience joy and frustration, love and hate, success and failure; (3) we formulate dreams, plans, and tactics and try to make them real; (4) we make and defy decisions and issue and carry out orders; (5) we enforce rules and break them; (6) we earn rewards and suffer penalties; and (7) we pursue the frivolous and the serious, play and work, games and "real life."[16]

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

Four types of task groups will be considered here: (1) the decision-discussion group, and three types of groups for the education of the participants; (2) the workshop; (3) the interpersonal encounter (including group therapy); and (4) the discussion for learning (or the seminar). Participants in this module experience should come out with some familiarity with all four.

The workshop. Actually, the module experience as a whole can be seen as an ongoing workshop. There is, of course, inevitable overlapping with elements of the other three types of groups. The workshop, for example, involves training and structured experiences along with problem-oriented discussions in order to advance the information and skills of the participants. Ordinarily the directive mode of leadership would be expected to predominate, at least in the organization of the separate parts of the workshop.

The discussion for learning. The seminar is more likely to involve democratic than authoritarian leadership styles (with exceptions, of course). It consists mainly of the attempt on the

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[16] Nixon, The Small Group, p. 19.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

part of group members to learn the content of written or other media content, to learn to reason together in a group, or to generate ideas related to the subject matter itself. A discussion planned to review the ideas contained in this module would constitute a seminar.

The encounter group. This type of group is aimed at social or emotional learning experiences for the members, which involves consciousness raising through openness and freedom of self-expression, along with occasional tactful confrontation of one another in order to learn how to proceed smoothly and constructively. Nondirective leadership usually predominates in the encounter group, although the members may choose to employ another leadership style for their own purposes. Ordinarily, encounter group members are normal, healthy persons trying to achieve greater self actualization. If they have more serious social or emotional problems to overcome in themselves or in their relationships with others, the group becomes a group therapy session. That is not the purpose of any of the experiences of this module.

The decision-discussion group. The aim of this group is to solve a work-related problem, to arrive at a decision or plan of action, and to make a recommendation. Usually the decision is not about the members of the group itself. Included in this category is the business meeting, which employs a style of leadership that is relatively directive yet also includes elements of the democratic or even laissez-faire style at times.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

The reader should notice that there will be separate simulation experiences suggested near the end of this module to illustrate the decision-discussion, the discussion for learning, and the encounter types of groups.

Task Group Traits

When planning for a meeting of any type of task group it is useful to keep in mind that at least these aspects must be considered:[17]

- people
- purpose
- atmosphere
- climate
- place and space
- costs
- time dimensions
- work before meeting
- plans, program, agenda
- beginnings, middles, and endings
- follow-up

[17] Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ronald Lippitt, The Volunteer Community: Creative Uses of Human Resources, 2nd ed. (San Diego: University Associates), 1977, pp. 17-18.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

If you are planning a meeting, there are several practical manuals to help you do it well.[18]

In describing any one of the four basic types of task groups and their interrelationships, a long list of terms could be used, ranging from the very practical to the highly theoretical. Let us begin with the most practical ones. Bradford suggests looking at the following characteristics of mature groups:[19]

- involvement
- responsibility
- trust and caring
- use of resources
- listening
- self-examination
- experimentation
- using subgroups
- dealing with differences
- flight behavior
- accepting new members
- hidden agendas

Hanson lists thirty eight very specific questions that are extremely useful in helping the beginner to conceptualize what actually goes on during a group session, including subject matter as well as group process or change of atmosphere and feeling, etc. He groups the specific items under the following headings:[20]

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[18] See, for example, Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt, The Volunteer Community; Leland P. Bradford, Making Meetings Work: A Guide for Leaders and Group Members (La Jolla University Associates), 1976; William Fawcett Hill, Learning Thru Discussion, A Guide for Leaders and Members of Discussion Groups (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications), 1969; and Gerard Egan, Face to Face: The Small-Group Experience and Interpersonal Growth (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.), 1973.

[19] Bradford, Making Meetings Work, pp. 29f.

[20] Philip G. Hanson, "What to Look for in Groups," in J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, eds., The 1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators (La Jolla, CA: University Associates), 1972.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

- participation
- influence
- styles of influence
- decision-making procedures
- task functions
- maintenance functions
- group atmosphere
- membership
- feelings
- norms

On a more theoretical level, Hemphill and Westie have listed fourteen dimensions that can be observed during the course of group interaction.[21] These include the following items and definitions:

1. *AUTONOMY*--the degree to which a group functions independently of other groups and occupies an independent position in society.

2. *CONTROL*--the degree to which a group regulates the behavior of individuals while they are functioning as group members.

3. *FLEXIBILITY*--the degree to which a group's activities are marked by informal procedure rather than by adherence to established procedures.

4. *HEDONIC TONE*--the degree to which group membership is accompanied by a general feeling of pleasantness or agreeableness.

5. *HOMOGENEITY*--the degree to which members of a group are similar, with respect to socially relevant characteristics.

6. *INTIMACY*--the degree to which members of a group are mutually acquainted with one another and are familiar with the most personal details of one another's lives.

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[21] This 14 item list was taken from J.K. Hemphill and C.M. Westie, "The Measurement of Group Dimensions," Journal of Psychology, vol. 29 (April 1950), pp. 325-342.

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

7. *PARTICIPATION*--the degree to which members apply time and energy to group activities.

8. *PERMEABILITY*--the degree to which a group permits ready and easy access to membership.

9. *POLARIZATION*--the degree to which a group is oriented and works toward a single goal which is clear and specific to all members.

10. *POTENCY*--the degree to which a group has primary significance for its members.

11. *SIZE*--the number of persons regarded as being members of the group.

12. *STABILITY*--the degree to which the group persists over a period of time with essentially the same characteristics.

13. *STRATIFICATION*--the degree to which a group orders or arranges its members into status heirarchies or classes.

14. *VISCIDITY*--the degree to which members of the group function as a unit.

Dynamics

In addition to examining the purpose and structure of groups, social scientists have studied group dynamics. Of the fourteen group dimensions identified by Hemphill and Westie (see above), the following five could be used to describe the extent to which the members of a group share a common identity and work in unison: *HEDONIC TONE, HOMOGENEITY, PARTICIPATION, PERMEABILITY, and VISCIDITY.*[22]

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[22]Hemphill and Westie, "Group Dimensions." Some additional dimensions have been identified by other social scientists. For example, Leland P. Bradford, in Making Meetings Work: A Guide for Leaders and Group Members (La Jolla University Associates, 1976) lists the following dimensions, among others: involvement, responsibility, trust and caring, listening, experimentation, and hidden agenda. (pp. 29f.)

DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

The above qualities may be exhibited in varying degrees by different types of groups. However, if a group has been formed for the purpose of carrying out a specific task, it is very important for the group to develop a "personality" that resists disruption, can concentrate on its tasks, and that rewards its members with the satisfaction of accomplishment and social interaction. Without these qualities, the group will be either prevented from completing its tasks or it will be restricted greatly in what it is able to accomplish.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: DESCRIPTIVE CONCEPTS

A group is defined as "a plurality of individuals who are in contact with one another, who take one another into account, and who are aware of some significant commonality."[23]

Four major types of task groups include:	Decision-Discussion group Workshop Interpersonal Encounter Discussion for Learning
Some of the many dimensions along which a group can be characterized are as follows:	Styles of Influence Decision-Making Procedures Use of Resources Maintenance Functions
Group dynamics can be described by the following terms (among others):	Hedonic Tone--the degree of pleasantness or agreeableness present in a group Homogeneity--the degree of similarity between members Participation--the degree of time and energy given to the group by members Permeability--the degree to which a group permits ready and easy access to membership Viscidity--the degree to which members of the group function as a unit

[23] Olmstead, The Small Group, p. 21.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION IN THE PERFORMANCE OF TASKS

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

The level of effectiveness of a group's performance can be assessed by carefully observing in what manner and how well group members work together. Indicators of the effectiveness of the ability of a group to function include:[24]

- Group Size and Composition--How large is the group? Are there subgroups or cliques within it? What roles do members fill? Are all necessary roles assumed by the members?
- Communications--Who speaks to whom? How often? Do members interpret one another's signals accurately or seek clarification if uncertain? Do visual messages corroborate or conflict with verbal ones?
- Cohesion--Does the group function as a team? Do the roles of different members complement each other? Do members change roles when necessary to fulfill a function or to carry out an activity? Is there esprit de corps? Do members like one another?

These indicators can help one to assess the group's productivity or ability to perform. Observations can also be made regarding the ability of the group to: 1) set goals; 2) resolve conflicts; 3) identify and use resources; and 4) evaluate products and performance. These four functions must be carried out, no matter what the task, in order to complete it efficiently and effectively. The extent to which a group is able to fulfill these functions is, furthermore, another indication of the level of effectiveness of joint performance (i.e., dynamics) the group has attained.

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[24] Some additional observation guidelines, including 38 questions relating to group processes, are presented in J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones (eds.), The 1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators (La Jolla, CA: University Associates), 1972.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

Group Size and Composition

The size of a group seems to have an effect on its other aspects. Several studies suggest that group size and opportunities for individual members to talk are inversely related. As the size of the group increases, individual members have fewer opportunities to talk. Bales and Strodtbeck observed that the difference between the most talkative and least talkative members increased when the size of the group expanded from 3 to 10.[25] A study conducted by James on committees in the U.S. Senate demonstrated that the mean size for action-taking groups was 6.5 members, while that for non-action-taking groups was 14.0.[26] Thus, group size apparently has been shown to reduce communication and productivity in groups.

While the literature on the unique characteristics of small groups of specific sizes is extensive, it is not conclusive. Weick believes that some researchers have focused on the wrong issue by addressing group size as a major variable in and of itself.

> ...size, per se, is a misleading variable if it is used as the starting point of an inquiry. Whenever there is a change in size several things happen.[27]

Weick contends that size and its associated variables cannot be isolated from one another sufficiently to make clear interpretations

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[25] R.F. Bales and F.L. Strodtbeck, "Phases in Group Problem-Solving," Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology (1951), vol. 46.

[26] J. James, "A Preliminary Study of the Size Determinant in Small Group Interaction," American Sociological Review (1951), 16:345-363.

[27] Karl W. Weick, The Social Psychology of Organizing (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley), 1969, p. 24. (emphasis, the author's)

about their interdependency. Nevertheless, Weick makes some very insightful observations about the impact of numbers on the interaction among group members.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

> The number of persons in a group may at times be crucial, but this is true mostly of very small numbers...In a dyad there is interdependence, reciprocal behavior, and the necessity for accomodation to another person...[while] the phenomena of control, cooperation and competition, and influence are produced by [the] transition [from two to three].[28]

Therefore, it is Weick's contention that strong causal statements relating group size to productivity can be made only in relation to very small groups. Weick further contends that if the interplay of size and its associated variables is understood at the level of small groups, this knowledge can be extended to larger groups by analysis of the sub-groups formed. Thomas and Fink in essence support Weick's conclusions with their review of several studies suggesting that role differentiation, role specialization, number of leaders, and number of cliques all tend to increase in direct proportion to group size.[29]

Group composition is largely determined by the task or tasks the group has been formed to carry out. It must be technically capable of executing the work, and thus must use technical expertise as a criterion for membership. However, since both social relations and political realities impinge upon group effectiveness, these factors undoubtedly will also enter into decisions regarding group composition. In fact, political realities have

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[28] Weick, Social Psychology, p. 24.

[29] E.J. Thomas and C.F. Fink, "Effects of Group Size," Psychological Bulletin (1963), 60:371-384.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

had a tremendous impact on the formation of such groups as national advisory panels, school and community advisory councils, and other such groups, which must be balanced according to sex, ethnicity, and constituency representation.

Bales and Borgatta differentiate between persons with "social-emotional skills" and those with "task-oriented skills." They report finding a positive correlation between groups in which there is a mix of persons having social-emotional and task-oriented skills and the groups' activity rate.[30] If the group is being formed to improve the performance of individuals in different roles (e.g., leader, recorder, observer), one thing that should be considered is the inclusion of group members who would be effective role models. Of course, rotating roles among the members should also help them to acquire skills in fulfilling various role functions. However, the presence of role models to demonstrate these skills may make it easier for the less-skilled members to acquire them.

A recent study conducted by Hallinan and Tuma shows that in traditional classroom settings, when students are allowed to form groups based on their own choice, "friendly relations" increase. The researchers report that:

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[30] R.R. Bales and E.F. Borgatta, "Interaction of Individuals in Reconstituted Groups," Sociometry, 16:302-320, and "Task and Accumulation of Experience as Factors in the Interaction of Small Groups," Sociometry, 16:239-252.

> the only other feature of instructional organization included in our analyses to have such strong positive effects on change to friendlier choices is homogeniety of materials.[31]

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They note that in open classrooms, where students frequently have an opportunity to work with other students of their choice, the development of friendly interpersonal relations is fostered. However, the individualized nature of the curriculum works against the classroom structure. This is the reverse of the situation in traditional classroom settings, where effects of the homogeneity of materials on interpersonal relations are obviated by infrequent opportunities for students to work in small groups, especially those of their own choice.

Thus, it is possible to develop good interpersonal relations among members of a group by initially having them work on the same materials, and then allowing them to form groups of their own choice. The implications of this study for the management of a cooperative group interaction skills curriculum in the classroom will be discussed at greater length in Module 2: Implementing and Managing a Curriculum ("Establishing Groups," page 21).

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[31] Maureen T. Hallinan and Nancy Brandon Tuma, "Classroom Effects on Change in Children's Friendships," Sociology of Education, (October 1978), 51:280. Other researchers have found that communication within a group can be improved by increasing the cooperative behavior of members. See, for example, D.W. Johnson and F.P. Johnson, Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), 1975.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

Communication

Individual status, prior relationships, access to information, and seating arrangements are all interrelated with communications patterns. Group members who have more relevant information, or information not available to the other members, have an advantage in solving group problems.[32] Bene and Sheates studied the influence of access to information on groups, and found that members with prior information related to the problem entered the discussion earlier, initiated more task-oriented communications, had their suggestions accepted more frequently, and were rated by others as contributing more to the tasks than members with no such prior knowledge.[33]

Status within the group and friendships among group members can hinder effective communications in two ways: 1) low-status members are discouraged from making suggestions that might not be approved by higher status members; and 2) group members who are friends tend to talk with one another more often than with other members. Status and friendships also frequently determine seating arrangements, which in turn affect the amount of communication among specific members and the pattern in which it flows. For example, Bavelas and Leavitt both found that in laboratory experiments with groups, individuals who occupied central positions were more likely to be active,

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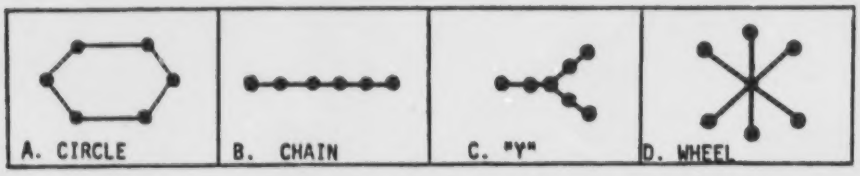
[32] J.K. Hemphill, et al., "The Relation of Task-Relevant Information and Attempts to Lead," Psychological Monograph #414 (1956).

[33] K.D. Benne and P. Sheates, "Functional Roles and Group Members," Journal of Social Issues (1948), 4(2):41-49.

to lead, and to be more satisfied with their job than were other members.[34,35] These researchers experimented with controlled communication within groups by specifying the flow of information in four distinct patterns, as illustrated below.



[adapted from Secord and Backman, Social Psychology, 2nd ed., p. 369.] The lines represent the flow of communication; the dots each represent a group member. (For reference, see page 26)

Bavelas and Leavitt found that communication patterns affected the amount of activity, satisfaction, and accuracy of performance on discovery problems at both the individual and the group level. Groups arranged to afford a high degree of centrality (pattern D) tended to organize quickly to solve group problems. However, when communications were decentralized (pattern A), there was greater activity (members wrote more messages and corrected more errors) and members got greater satisfaction from the tasks, but devised fewer error-free solutions of the problems they were assigned to solve.

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[34] Alex Bavelas, "Communication Patterns in Task-Oriented Groups," in Cartwright and Zander (eds.), Group Dynamics (New York: Harper and Row), 1950.

[35] H.J. Leavitt, "Some Effects of Certain Communication Patterns on Group Performance," in E.E. Maccoby, et al. (eds.), Readings in Social Psychology (third ed.) (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston), 1958.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

Other research has shown that, over time, differences between groups structured as circles and those organized as wheels disappear:

> That groups learn to organize their functioning more efficiently in time is also consistent with a study reporting that differences in the production of correct solutions in a simple task for groups run under the condition of the circle and the wheel disappeared after a large number of trials involving reinforcement for speed and accuracy of solutions.[36]

However, the authors warn the reader that such findings must not be taken out of context since groups and communication networks often function within larger organizations, which can impact upon communication patterns evident within the subgroups.

Cohesion

Although different theorists have developed different definitions for cohesion, most agree that group cohesiveness refers to the degree to which the members of a group desire to remain in it. Motivation for joining and remaining in a group may stem from 1) the satisfaction that results from interaction with group members; 2) enjoyment of the activities themselves; or 3) the belief that participation in the group will lead to some other goal that could not otherwise be achieved.

Oftentimes, the motive for joining a group is quite different from that which induces a member to remain. For example, an individual may join a particular group to pass a specific piece of legislation. As a result of frequent interaction with

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[36] Paul F. Secord and Carl W. Backman, Social Psychology, 2nd edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company), 1974, p. 372.

other group members, he/she becomes attracted to them and for this reason maintains membership after the group has accomplished its task. Homans (1950) proposed a hypothesis to that effect. He states:

> If the frequency of interaction between two or more persons increases, the degree of their liking for one another will increase, and vice versa.[37]

This view is further supported by the research conducted by Hallinan and Tuma. (See "Group Size and Composition," p. 20.) They state:

> ...increased frequency of interaction within the group will stabilize [students'] positive sentiments towards one another. Freedom of choice also permits students who do not know each other well to investigate possible similarities that may lead to friendship.[38]

Deutsch (1949) advances the hypothesis that <u>when people are cooperatively interdependent they will develop an attraction to one another</u>.[39] He obtained empirical support for this theory of interpersonal cooperation in an experiment comparing cooperative and competitive classroom groups. In the Deutsch experiment, intragroup cooperation was fostered at the same time that intergroup competition was stimulated. This structure of cooperation within the group to accomplish a task while in competition with another

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[37] George C. Homans, <u>The Human Group</u> (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World), 1950.

[38] Hallinan and Tuma, "Classroom Effects," p. 280.

[39] M. Deutsch, "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Cooperation and Competition Upon Group Process," <u>Human Relations</u> (1949), 2:199-232.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

group enables both groups to evaluate and compare their performances. The dynamics of this structure gives support to the need of individual members to feel similar to other members of their group and dissimilar to nongroup members.

According to Weick the significance of group similarity in group research has been well-substantiated, while that of dissimilarity has been (for the most part) neglected.[40] He goes on to report, however, that Simmel (a classical social scientist), offers a description of dissimilarity that "provides a useful antidote to the current emphasis on similarity as the pervasive dynamic in groups."[41] This is a portion of Simmel's description as quoted by Weick:

> For the actions of the individual, his difference from others is of far greater interest than is his similarity with them. It largely is differentiation from others that challenges and determines our activity.[42]

Most of the studies dealing with similarities among group members focus on friendship choices and related matters. There are some studies that focus instead on interdependence of members for the purpose of task accomplishment. In this case, liking and attraction are based on the perceived value of different contributions members can make to the group, which is called a symbiotic group. Gross (1956) conducted a study of informal

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[40] George Simmel, Conflicts, trans. Kurt H. Wolff (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press), 1955, as reported in Weick, Social Psychology, p. 14.

[41] Weick, Social Psychology, p. 15.

[42] Weick, Social Psychology, p. 15.

groups within the Air Force.[43] As a result of this study he concluded that symbiotic relationships provide a more stable basis for attraction than do consensual ones. However, symbiotic relations are possible only where the roles of members have been differentiated. There may be a direct relationship between an individual's enjoyment of activities and knowing what role he or she is to perform.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

Performance

The ability of a group to perform is dependent on indicators of the working of its internal system (as described above): (1) group size and composition; (2) communications; and (3) cohesion. In order to perform, i.e., to solve problems or to carry out tasks, a group must have the requisite skills and knowledge (or know where and how to get them); it must exchange information among members; and it must work together as a unit. All of these factors need to be present in the appropriate combination in order to achieve successful performance of the task or to solve the problem facing the group. For example, a twenty-five person advisory panel that meets bimonthly cannot be expected to produce a training guide for advisory panel members. The group is far too large, meets too infrequently, and is organized and composed to provide advice and guidance rather than to produce written materials.

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[43] E. Gross, "Dimensions of Leadership," Personnel Journal (1961), 40:213-218.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

Of course, there are ways to manipulate the internal system to meet the needs of the task or problem at hand. Subgroups can be formed, outsiders can be brought in to assist in specific ways, exercises and activities can be used to improve communication among members, and more frequent opportunities can be arranged for members to work together so that they will understand each other better. The ability of a group to perform will directly affect its ability (1) to set goals; (2) to resolve conflicts; (3) to identify and use resources; and (4) to evaluate its work.

Setting goals. The clear statement of goals that can be agreed upon by the whole group is crucial to the successful completion of tasks. According to Raven and Rietsema, the incentive value of a particular goal for an individual will depend not only on its content, but also on how explicitly the goal is stated, how clear the paths for goal attainment are, and the likelihood of successful achievement of the goal.[44]

Resolving conflicts. Conflicts arise when members cannot agree on goals; on what resources to use in achieving them and how; or on the effectiveness of actions taken. Conflicts sometimes result in the withdrawal of members from participation. In a study of problem-solving by groups, French found that some members withdrew from participation when disagreement

[44] B.H. Raven and J. Rietsema, "The Effect of Varied Clarity of Group Goal and Group Path Upon the Individual and His Relation to this Group," Human Relations (1957), 10:29-44.

arose among group members. He noted that withdrawal was most likely to occur when members disagreed over the method to use in solving the problem.[45]

Conflict may also result from "the stress experienced by an individual when different individuals or groups make contradictory demands that s/he cannot satisfy by any compatible courses of action." [emphasis added][46] In order to avoid such stress, research has shown that roles should be unambiguously defined, properly matched with the status of an individual, and suited to the personal interests and skills of the group member.[47] It is evident that proper use of the resources of the group, both material and human, can help to avoid as well as to resolve conflicts.

Filley suggests that there are three basic methods of conflict resolution.[48] The most desirable is the win-win method, where both sides are presumed to have a say so, and work cooperatively and integratively to achieve a joint payoff. There are also the undesirable methods--the win-lose and the lose-lose methods--where one wins and the other party or side loses, or

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[45] J.R.P. French, "The Disruption and Cohesion of Groups," Journal of Abnormal Psychology (1941), 36:224-237.

[46] French, "Cohesion of Groups," pp. 224-237.

[47] S. Adams, "Status Congruency as a Variable in Small Group Performance," Social Forces (1953), 32:16-22; and R. Kahn, et al., Organizational Stress (New York: Wiley), 1964.

[48] Alan C. Filley, Interpersonal Conflict Resolution (Management Application Series), (Glencoe, IL: Scott, Foresman & Co.), 1975.

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where both sides must inevitably lose in the course of conflict "resolution." Some common characteristics of win-lose and lose-lose methods include the following:[49]

1. There is a clear we-they distinction between the parties, rather than a we-versus-the-problem orientation.
2. Energies are directed toward the other party in an atmosphere of total victory or total defeat.
3. Each party sees the issue only from its own point of view, rather than defining the problem in terms of mutual needs.
4. The emphasis in the process is upon attainment of a solution, rather than upon a definition of goals, values, or motives to be attained with the solution.
5. Conflicts are personalized rather than depersonalized via an objective focus on facts and issues.
6. There is no differentiation of conflict-resolving activities from other group processes, nor is there a planned sequence of those activities.
7. The parties are conflict-oriented, emphasizing the immediate disagreement, rather than relationship-oriented, emphasizing the long-term effect of their differences and how they are resolved.

On the other hand, there are some methods common to the win-win strategies. Each party will say in effect to the other parties involved:[50]

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[49] Filley, Conflict Resolution, p. 25.

[50] Filley, Conflict Resolution, pp. 27-30.

1. "I want a solution which achieves your goals and my goals and is acceptable to both of us."
2. "It is our collective responsibility to be open and honest about facts, opinions, and feelings."
3. "I will control the process by which we arrive at agreement but will not dictate content."

Filley notes that there are certain attitudes that are important to the achievement of integrative solutions: (1) The needs of other parties must be felt to be legitimate and sincere; (2) the other party should be viewed as a helpful resource; (3) there must be a genuine belief that mutual benefit is preferable to the exclusive gain of one party; (4) there must be a belief that an integrative solution is possible; and (5) rather than second-guessing the motives, attitudes and feelings of others, it is better to check them out in reality."[51]

A more broad view of conflict-related, or conflict-inducing feelings is the theory of Bion, who believes that there are four major emotions experienced in a group: fight, flight, pairing, and dependency.[52] Depending on how these are handled, conflict might be enhanced or decreased. At any point in the life of a group one of these emotions is said to be dominant. The group may be in a fighting mood when almost every comment, no matter how innocuous, seems to call for a hostile reply. It may be in

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[51] Filley, Conflict Resolution, p. 100.

[52] W.R. Bion, "Experiences in Groups," Human Relations (1948), 1:314-320, as reported in Clovis R. Shepherd, Small Groups, Some Sociological Perspectives (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co.), 1964, pp. 52-53.

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a flight mood and unable to deal with any issue, evading or ignoring things with which it should deal. It may be in a pairing mood, when one or more pairs of members are carrying on personal conversations with the unspoken approval of the others. Or it may be in a dependent mood, in which the group, rather than tackling its problem, tries to get someone or something to solve it. These four moods are essentially ways to avoid dealing with conflict or opposition.

Bradford provides another view of dysfunctional behaviors in which he sees the most common ones as: blocking; power seeking; recognition seeking; dominating; and clowning.[53] The question still remains of how to confront conflict, dysfunctional behavior or lack of productivity. Egan provides a very thoughtful set of guidelines.[54]

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[53] Leland P. Bradford, Making Meetings Work, pp. 48-49.

[54] Gerard Egan, Face to Face: The Small Group Experience and Interpersonal Growth (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company), 1973, pp. 133-134.

1. Confront in order to mainfest your concern for the other.

2. Make confrontation a way of becoming involved with the other.

3. Before confronting, become aware of your bias either for or against the confrontee. Don't refrain from confrontation because you are for him or use confrontation as a means of punishment, revenge, or domination because you are against him. Tell him of your bias from the outset.

4. Before confronting the other, try to understand the relationship that exists between you and him, and try to proportion your confrontation to what the relationship will bear.

5. Before confronting, try to take into consideration the possible punitive side effects of your confrontation.

6. Try to be sure that the strength of vehemence of your confrontation and the areas of sensitivity you deal with are proportioned to the needs, sensitivities, and capabilities of the confrontee.

7. Confront behavior primarily; be slow to confront motivation.

8. Confront clearly; indicate what is fact, what is feeling, and what is hypothesis. Don't state interpretations as facts. Don't engage in constant or long-winded interpretations of the behavior of others.

9. Remember that much of your behavior in the group, such as not talking to others, or expressing a particular emotion, can have confrontational effects.

10. Be willing to confront yourself honestly in the group.

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

In discussing conflicts, Caplow deals with four stock situations: "(1) a personal feud between two key members of the organization; (2) the alleged persecution of a subordinate by a superior; (3) the breakdown of cooperation between two related departments; (4) a schism between ideological factions."[55] Solutions will not be attempted here--the situations are mentioned only in order to sensitize the reader to the need for studying the nature of conflict in small task groups.

Evaluation. Evaluation, planned in advance and built into the activities and procedures of the group, can provide the group with information about how well it is performing its tasks and solving problems. Evaluation can be designed to study group procedures and outcomes. For example, by asking an outsider to observe it, the group can gain information about how well its members communicate with one another. Every evaluation should be structured so that it provides usable information to the group.

In the section that follows we describe five steps that a task-oriented group may use in evaluating the performance of the group. (The five steps are an adaptation from the INTERACTION curriculum.)

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[55] Theodore Caplow, How to Run Any Organization: A Manual of Practical Sociology (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press), 1976.

1. *Decide what should have happened in a situation*

Before the group can evaluate what happened in a situation, it must form a mental picture of what should have happened had the situation been ideal. This "ideal" picture will help in formulating criteria by which to judge what really did happen. The group should define its ideal situation with respect to two main goals: (1) accomplishing the task, and (2) maintaining group cohesion or unity.

When constructing its ideal picture of what should have happened, the group should ask itself the following questions:

- What job was the group trying to do? How should it have been done?
- What were the goals of the group? What was the purpose of the particular job it was trying to do?
- What kind of plan did the group have?
- How should the group have worked together to achieve its goals?
- What should each member of the group have done to help the group finish its job and achieve its goals?

2. *Decide what did happen in the situation*

To do this step in evaluation effectively, the group must have good powers of observation. It must be able to use eyes and ears to determine accurately what went on as it or another group performed a task. It should observe what happens with regard to performance of the task and as well as with regard to maintenance of group cohesion.

When trying to determine what did happen in a situation, the group should ask itself the following questions:

- Was the job finished?
- Was the job finished on time?
- Was the job finished properly, or were there mistakes in it? If there were mistakes, what were they? How important were they to the success of the group's work?

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- Did everyone do (or try to do) the part of the job that he or she had been given? If not, who failed to do his or her part?

- How did the group feel about its work? Was each person happy with his or her own work and with the work of the others? If not, who was unhappy, and about what?

- Do the group members' reactions to each other on this job suggest that they will want to work together again in the future? If not, what do their feelings suggest?

3. *Compare and contrast what should have happened with what did happen*

Now the group should compare the two "mental pictures" it created in the previous two steps. This is the judgment step in the evaluation process. By the time the group has finished noticing similarities and differences between what should have happened and what did happen, it will have judged how close the group came to achieving its goals.

When determining similarities and differences between what happened and what should have happened, the group should ask itself the following questions:

- What things about the work itself happened as they should have happened?

- What things about the way the group worked together happened as they should have happened?

- What things about the job did not happen as they should have happened? Did the group finish its job, but in a way different from the way it had planned? Did the job itself create problems that the group had not expected? Were there things in the situation or the environment that made problems that the group had not expected? What were the unexpected problems that came up?

- Did the members of the group have problems in working together that should not have happened? If so, which members had problems and what were they?

Emphasize that the group can learn from both the differences and the similarities that it discovers.

4. *Figure out reasons for these likenesses and differences*

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

Before the group can decide on how to improve its performance in the future, it must determine not only what occurred in the present situation, but why each thing occurred.

When trying to determine reasons for similarities and differences between the real and the ideal, the group should ask itself the following questions:

- Some things about the job happened as they should have happened. What was the reason for each of these things? What did these things show about skills and strengths the group had in doing its job? What talents and resources did the group use well? What was good about the plan that the group made?

- Some things about the way the group worked together happened as they should have happened. What was the reason for each of these things? What did these things show about the strengths the group had in working together? In what cases did the group work out its conflicts well? In what cases did the group use good communication to work together or to solve its problems?

- Some things about the job did not happen as they should have happened. What was the reason for each of these things? What weaknesses in the group's skills did these things show?

- Some things about the way the group worked together did not happen as they should have happened. What was the reason for each of these things? What private needs, values, and goals of group members might have caused these problems? How did their needs, values, and goals differ from those of the group?

HOW GROUPS FUNCTION

5. *Decide what to do to make things better in the future*

This is the final step in the evaluation process, and also the main reason for the process taking place. If evaluation does not lead to improvement, it is virtually useless.

Improvement involves continuing to do what is done well (similarities between what happened and what should have happened) and changing what is not done well (differences between what happened and what should have happened). In trying to determine what it should do to improve in the future, the group should ask itself the following questions:

- What things about the way the group does its job should the group keep the same in the future?
- What things about the way the group works together should the group keep the same in the future?
- What things about the job should the group make different in the future? How should the group change these things? How could the group plan better? How could it use its resources and equipment better?
- What things about the way it works together should the group make different in the future? How should the group change these things? How could the group communicate better? What group conflicts need to be worked out? What individual needs and goals should be put aside so that the group can work together? What individual needs should be given more attention?

The group should consider improvements (1) with regard to similar situations that may come up in the future (for instance, the activity in this worksheet gives students a chance to make suggestions about the ways the fictional group might complete their task) and (2) with regard to <u>any</u> situation that may come up. For instance, how to plan better or how to communicate better.

Once plans for improvement have been made, these plans must be put into action. The group cannot, of course, take action to improve the fictional situation, although it can suggest what might be done. But you should emphasize that in real-life situations the evaluation process should end not with a list on paper but with action. Action is not a part of the evaluation (judging) process. It is the goal toward which that process strives.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: HOW GROUPS FUNCTION IN THE PERFORMANCE OF TASKS

Some indicators of the level of effectiveness of a group's performance are:

- Group size and composition
- Communications
- Cohesion

The ability of a group to perform will affect its ability to:

- Set goals
- Resolve conflicts
- Identify and use resources
- Evaluate its work

A clear statement of goals that can be agreed upon by the whole group is crucial to the successful completion of tasks.

The proper use of resources of the group, both material and human, can help to avoid as well as to resolve conflicts.

Evaluation can provide the group with information about how well it is performing its tasks and solving problems.

All task-oriented groups must:

- Set goals
- Resolve conflicts
- Identify and use resources
- Evaluate products and performance

if they are to successfully accomplish their tasks.

LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

Since the time of the industrial revolution, Western Civilization has become increasingly dependent on groups and teams to perform work. The major force behind this shift has been the growing complexity of tasks that must be performed. Where once a woman would make all the cloth[illegible]ner family wore, or a man would build his own farming tools, today a team of specialists is needed to operate a factory or to plan corporate policy. Such teamwork requires leadership. This section will address the many definitions of leadership and the theories regarding leadership within small groups that are pertinent to the teaching of generic work skills.

As a result of studying this section you will be able to:

- provide definitions of leadership;
- discuss leadership styles and functions; and
- see the leadership perspective in the GWS curriculum.

Definitions of Leadership

Leadership is often defined according to the context in which it is being examined. Until the 1950's researchers viewed leadership from the perspective of the individual--the personal characteristics associated with leaders. One of the earliest of these perspectives is now known as the "great man" theory, which maintains that individuals with special and unique characteristics

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rise to positions of leadership by virtue of those qualities. Social scientists in this period defined leadership only in terms of the qualities and skills they believed leaders possessed; they did not attempt to define it in other ways.

In the 1950's, researchers began exploring the circumstances in which individuals assumed leadership. It was noted that leaders bring different skills and leadership styles to different contexts or situations. This view of leadership is called the situational approach. In this period, since social scientists were studying the context in which leaders acted, they defined leadership according to those circumstances.

More recently, instead of analyzing what the leader brings to the situation, researchers have defined leadership by examining and describing the eventualities that stipulate specific behaviors the leader must exhibit in order to successfully lead. Researchers are identifying such factors as the preference of individual followers for more or less self-direction; their orientation toward tasks or people; their desire for greater or less structuring of the task to be accomplished; and environmental factors that affect group decision making (a focus of students of leadership in organizations).[56]

Finally, the most recent work being conducted in the study of leadership perceives it as an interactive process, rather than

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[56] Edwin P. Hollander, Leadership Dynamics: A Practical Guide to Effective Relationships (New York: The Free Press), 1978, pp. 34-38.

as the role of an individual. Hollander, who represents this view of leadership, defines it as a "transactional process."

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> ...the term transactional is intended to indicate a more active role by followers in an exchange relationship with the leader, including mutual influence.[57]

Thus, the researchers who hold this view of leadership are now turning their attention to the effect that leaders and followers have on one another's behavior. For Hollander, a refocusing of attention on the transaction that occurs necessitates minimal concern for leadership style. However, his discussion of leadership functions addresses many of the same topics other researchers discuss as leadership style.

Leadership Style and Function

Many studies of leadership have concentrated on the differential impact of authoritarian versus democratic styles. One of the most widely known and discussed studies was conducted by White and Lippitt. Using four boys' clubs of five members each, leaders were trained in "authoritarian," "democratic," and "laissez-faire" styles, according to specific definitions of these styles set down by the researchers. The differences between the three styles are based on the directiveness of the leader, with the authoritarian and laissez-faire styles representing the two ends of the spectrum. Thus, the authoritarian leaders specified policy, determined the content of activities and their order, and established

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[57]Hollander, Leadership Dynamics, p. 40. (emphasis, the author's)

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themselves as the judges of the boys' successes and failures. The laissez-faire leaders provided information on request but neither suggested activities nor provided structure or direction for activities chosen by the club members. The democratic leaders helped the club members to select activities and means for accomplishing them. They offered suggestions and guidance as they deemed appropriate and when requested. They timed their suggestions to meet the needs and interests of the boys. Their praise and criticism were aimed at helping each club member judge the quality of his or her own work.[58]

On the basis of their findings, White and Lippitt concluded that:[59]

- a democractic style of leadership is not less productive or "efficient" than an authoritarian one;
- group members gain more satisfaction from a democratic style of leadership than from laissez-faire or authoritarian styles;
- there are significant differences between democratic and laissez-faire leadership;
- authoritarian leadership can result in hostility and dissatisfaction, not all of which may be expressed; and
- democratic leadership encourages self-direction, "friendliness," and a strong sense of group, while authoritarian leadership fosters dependence and conformity.

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[58] Ralph White and Ronald Lippitt, "Leader Behavior and Member Reaction in Three 'Social Climates,'" in Cartwright and Zander (eds.), Group Dynamics: Research and Theory (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers), 1968, pp. 318-335.

[59] White and Lippitt, "Leader Behavior."

LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

An alternative way of viewing leadership is that of the influence process. Three processes of social influence are said to operate in social situations: (1) Compliance--a process in which a person adopts an attitude or opinion which another person or group wants him or her to adopt regardless of acceptance or belief in the attitude or opinion; (2) Identification--a process by which an individual adopts an attitude or opinion of another person or group because he or she identifies with the other, takes the role of the other, and incorporates the other into his or her own self image; and (3) Internalization--a process by which a person adopts an attitude as his or her own because it agrees with his or her perspective or solves a problem.[60]

As researchers pursued their study of leadership styles they noted that some groups and group members preferred one style over another, often changing their preferences depending on the situation. Edwin Hollander reports on research conducted by Crowe, Bochner and Clark, in which they conclude that authoritarian or autocratic behavior on the part of the followers elicits from the leader a style to match. Hollander adds the caution that there are "some limits to this effect." He notes that if the demands placed by followers on a leader are "too great," they may

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[60] H. Kelman, "Processes of Opinion Change," Public Opinion Quarterly (1961), 25:57-78.

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cause "resistance." For example, a leader may become more autocratic in an effort to exert control over the behavior of the group.[61]

As a result of his comprehensive compilation and analysis of the research and his theoretical study of leadership, Ralph Stogdill concludes that the most effective leadership style is one that uses structure both as a means of accomplishing tasks and as a method of effecting interaction. He arrived at this conclusion by first classifying all the kinds of leadership styles defined by various researchers into two major categories: "person-oriented patterns of leader behavior" and "work-oriented patterns of leader behavior."[62]

Figure 2 summarizes Stogdill's classification of leadership styles. The dimensions can be viewed as continua contrasting the person-oriented pattern with the work-oriented pattern. The five continua are as follows: (1) democratic vs. autocratic, (2) permissive vs. restrictive, (3) participative vs. distant, (4) follower-oriented vs. directive, and (5) considerate vs. structured.

Stogdill contends that there are important differences among the various styles grouped within each of the two major categories.

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[61] Edwin P. Hollander, Leadership Dynamics: A Practical Guide to Effective Relationships (New York: The Free Press), 1978, pp. 65-66.

[62] Ralph M. Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research (New York: The Free Press), 1974, p. 402.

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He supports his contention with tables that demonstrate the differential effects of each style on productivity, satisfaction, and cohesion.[63] Stogdill summarizes his findings with six major points that can be diagrammed as shown in Figure 3.

[63] Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, pp. 404-406.

LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

STYLE OF LEADERSHIP	PERSON-ORIENTED PATTERNS	WORK-ORIENTED PATTERNS
	Democratic	Autocratic
	Permissive	Restrictive
	Participative	Distant
	Follower-Oriented	Directive
	Considerate	Structured

Figure 2:

STOGDILL'S CLASSIFICATION OF LEADERSHIP STYLES

	LEADERSHIP STYLE	
VARIABLES	PERSON-ORIENTED PATTERNS	WORK-ORIENTED PATTERNS
GROUP PRODUCTIVITY	no consistent relationship	leadership styles that maintain role differentiation and structured expectations show consistent relationship
GROUP COHESION	consistent relationship only for leadership styles that encourage and allow member participation in group activities and that demonstrate concern for followers	consistent relationship only for leadership styles that structure member expectations
MEMBER SATISFACTION	positive relationship	positive relationship a majority of time for leadership styles that structure member expectations

Figure 3:

STOGDILL'S FINDINGS SUMMARIZED;
DIFFERENTIAL EFFECTS OF CONTRASTING LEADERSHIP STYLES

LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

Stogdill's analysis is important for several reasons:

1. The trend has been toward the more person-oriented patterns of leadership style, which show positive correlations with satisfaction and cohesion and no consistent negative relation to productivity. As Hollander puts it, "a leader is the individual most responsible for maintaining the group and developing its cohesiveness."[64]
2. Initiating structure has been mistakenly equated by many researchers with restrictive, authoritarian leadership styles, which have a negative relation to group satisfaction, no consistent relation to productivity, and, frequently, a negative relation to group cohesion.
3. Hollander's concept of transaction is closely related to Stogdill's concern with structure. Stogdill states that the structuring of expectations is perhaps the central factor in leadership since it is intimately associated with the definition of leadership as the initiation and maintenance of structure in expectation and interaction.[65]

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[64] Hollander, Leadership Dynamics, p. 158.

[65] Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, p. 419.

LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

Hollander believes that "the leader is a part of the situation for followers;" someone who "helps to define the situation for them."[66]

Although Hollander discusses leadership functions in the context of organizations, much of what he says can be extrapolated to many other settings in which groups operate. These include such functions as:

- maintaining group cohesiveness;
- facilitating work;
- facilitating communication;
- supporting group members in the completion of their tasks;
- eliciting and encouraging creative participation of all members;
- guiding and coordinating the work of the group;
- facilitating decision making, including acting as the decision maker when necessary and appropriate;
- helping the group adapt to changing circumstances; and
- sharing leadership when it will add to group cohesion and facilitate completion of the task.

Leadership and the Generic Work Skills Curriculum

The generic work skills (or cooperative group interaction skills) curriculum emphasizes initiating and maintaining structure and the sharing of leadership as two important mechanisms for teaching people how to be both effective members and effective

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[66]Hollander, Leadership Dynamics, p. 152.

LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

leaders of small task-oriented groups.[67] The research and conclusions of both Stogdill and Hollander provide considerable theoretical support for this approach, as do the findings of the many social science researchers who report that different skills and leadership styles are needed for different tasks, group membership, and other situational factors.

The generic work skills curriculum attempts to enable all group members to experience and practice the necessary skills for effective cooperative group work. The curriculum also enables members to learn to share the responsibility and concern for the various roles that must be filled within the group and for the goals that are to be accomplished.

Once a person is perceived as a leader, members tend to respond to his or her behavior more readily than to that of others. At the same time, groups that experience consistent leadership are significantly more efficient than are those that change leaders often. Shared leadership provides consistent leadership while at the same time meeting changing requirements for leadership style and skill. It is for this reason that the sharing of leadership is emphasized in the generic work skills curriculum.

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[67] Bela H. Banathy, et al., INTERACTION: Learning Leadership/Membership Skills (San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development), 1976.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: LEADERSHIP WITHIN GROUPS

Leadership has been defined by:

- The traits of the leader
- The context or situation
- Extenuating circumstances
- The interchange between leaders and followers

Leadership styles include:

Person-Oriented Patterns

- Democractic, reinforcing, or persuasive
- Permissive or laissez-faire
- Participative
- Follower-oriented
- Considerate

Work-Oriented Patterns

- Authoritarian, autocractic, or coercive
- Restrictive
- Directive
- Distant
- Structured or initiating structure

Leadership functions include:

- Facilitating work and communication
- Supporting group members
- Encouraging creative participation
- Guiding and coordinating
- Facilitating decision making, making decisions
- Helping group to adapt to change
- Sharing leadership

Generic work skills, or cooperative group interaction skills, emphasize the use of structure and shared leadership in order to achieve small, task-oriented groups that attain high levels of productivity, satisfaction, and cohesion.

ANALYZE YOUR GROUPS

Using separate sheets of paper for each group, provide the following kinds of information for each group you described at the beginning of this module ("Name Your Groups"). DO NOT READ YOUR PREVIOUS DESCRIPTIONS AT THIS TIME.

- attributes;
- type of group;
- dynamic level;
- assess the ability of the group to function, referring to its size and composition, communications, and cohesion;
- analyze the performance of the group, including goal setting, resolution of conflicts, identification and use of resources, and evaluation of performance and products;
- identify the style of the group's leader(s)--if more than one style is used, list all of them and describe when each is used, analyze why, and state your assessment of its effectiveness;
- analyze your own role in the group. (Do you ever assume leadership? If so, under what circumstances? How would you classify your style of leadership? Do you use more than one style? Do you avoid assuming a leadership role? Why?)

When you have analyzed each of the groups, read your descriptions and compare them with these analyses. Are there any significant differences? If so, what are they? Do you attribute group problems to any different causes in this analysis? If so, what are they? How have your perceptions changed? Are your perceptions of group activities, group functions, or the interactions

of members any different now? If so, how? Why? Write your answers to these questions on the analysis sheet for each group for later reference.

PART TWO:
GENERIC WORK SKILLS

IDENTIFY AND ASSESS YOUR GENERIC WORK SKILLS

When a group is formed to carry out a task the members must be able to develop the skills necessary to complete the task. In addition to the technical skills required, there are other skills members should be able to draw upon if the group is to be effective.

Review the sheets you completed as part of the "Name Your Groups" and "Analyze Your Groups" exercises. Using a separate sheet of paper for each group, draw three columns per page. On the far left list the skills you employed as a member of those groups. In the second column note how often the skill was used:

1. frequently;
2. occasionally;
3. rarely; or
4. never.

In the third column, rate your skills:

1. orientation	:	The learner is able to understand the basic concepts and the purpose or function of the skills, but may not be able to perform the tasks.
2. familiarization	:	The learner can actively participate or practice skills only under close supervision and/or detailed instruction.

3. low proficiency :	Learner can perform tasks with few gross errors if given some supervision or adequate job aids.
4. high proficiency:	Learner can perform tasks efficiently, with little or no errors.

Compare the lists. Answer the questions below on another sheet of paper. Save all the sheets for future reference.

- Did you use some skills in one group but not another? Why?
- Did your skill level increase from one group situation to another? Why?
- What important skills, if any, do you lack?
- What skills would you like to improve?

COMPETENCIES NEEDED FOR COOPERATIVE GROUP WORK

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPETENCIES

The relatively recent interest of researchers in the study of groups has led to the development of theories about how groups operate and about the skills and knowledge--or competencies--needed by the members of groups in order to work together effectively. While the study of leadership has a long history, the study of groups is a more recent (although by no means new) phenomenon; the result, to a large extent, of the interest of business and industry and the institutions that develop their future leaders.

Because the ability to work well in a group setting is not a skill learned automatically while growing up, and because people are being called upon more and more frequently to work in groups, especially small task-oriented groups, it has become increasingly evident that the competencies needed to do so must be identified and taught.

This section of the module examines the competencies needed for cooperative group work, defines and describes them, and enables you to evaluate your own skill level with each. It will help you to:

- increase your understanding of the skills and knowledge required for cooperative group work;
- evaluate your level of competencies; and
- improve competencies in which you are weak and acquire others you lack.

DEFINITION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPETENCIES

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPETENCIES

There are eight competencies that are needed, no matter what specific tasks must be carried out, in order for groups to function effectively. These competencies include:

- communicating
- planning
- assuming and sharing leadership
- cooperating
- identifying and using resources
- resolving conflicts
- solving problems and making decisions
- evaluating your own performance and that of the group

Some of these skills--such as assuming and sharing leadership, planning, using resources, solving problems and making decisions, and evaluation--are management and administrative skills. The others--including communicating, cooperating, and resolving conflicts--are human interaction skills. Each competency will be discussed separately, beginning with a brief self-administered instrument with which you can assess your skill.

C O M M U N I C A T I N G

HOW WELL DO YOU COMMUNICATE?

1. Below are eight communication skills. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Present your ideas so that others will respond to them appropriately.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Listen carefully in order to understand the ideas of others.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Ask for clarification when you do not understand.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Rephrase the comments of others and ask if you have accurately expressed their meaning.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Encourage others to express their ideas by listening carefully and accepting their ideas.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Retain information in your head.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Take notes to record information.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Recognize that different people have different interests and perspectives that affect their behavior in groups.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some communication skills not listed above that you now do well. _____

   _____

3. What communication skills do you need to learn? _____

   _____

COMMUNICATING

COMMUNICATING

Communication is a two-way process consisting of a sender and a receiver of information. The sender is responsible for providing information in a readily understandable form, appropriate to the message being sent. The sender, therefore, must know the audience being addressed, what it does and does not know about the topic at hand, and the form of communication that would best convey the desired message. If the person or group to whom the message is directed does not understand the language used, cannot read or interpret symbols, or does not have the background knowledge necessary to make sense of the message, then the sender has failed to communicate effectively.

At the same time, it is the responsibility of the individual or group receiving the message to indicate clearly to the sender if the communication is not understood. This can be done by asking questions for clarification, by asking for restatements of the message, or by rephrasing the message and asking for confirmation of the accuracy of the restatement.

There are four major components to giving and receiving information. Their correct use determines whether communication has taken place effectively.

- *Speech*--including style, tone, complexity of thought, individuality of approach, appropriateness of words, precision of expression, definition, illustration, example, and brevity.

- *Non-verbal communication*--including bodily contact, proximity to the audience, orientation, posture, odor, head nods, facial expression, hand and body gestures, and eye contact.

COMMUNICATING

- *Listening*--including analysis, synthesis, priority of facts, and silence (a delayer of emotional response).
- *Interpretation*--including understanding and separating facts from opinion, rating facts, reasoning (linking facts to form a logical sequence).

One barrier to effective communication is the tendency of most people to approve or disapprove of a communication mentally as they receive it; to say to themselves, "I think that's right," or "I think that's wrong."

David W. Johnson developed a check list of some of the skills for sending messages, including the following:[68]

- Clearly "own" your messages by using personal pronouns such as I and my.
- Make your messages complete and specific.
- Be sure that your verbal and nonverbal communications convey the same message.
- Be redundant.
- Ask for feedback concerning the way your messages are received by asking for restatements and questions of clarification.
- Make the message appropriate to the receiver's frame of reference.
- Describe your feelings by name, action, or figure of speech.
- Describe the behavior of others without evaluation or interpretation.

Communication is most effective in an environment of trust and mutual understanding. The establishment of such an

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[68] David W. Johnson, Reaching Out: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-Actualization (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.), 1972.

environment is particularly crucial to the development of effective patterns of communication in small, task-oriented groups. As Goffman said, "When an individual enters the presence of others, they commonly seek to acquire information about him or to bring into play information about him already possessed."[69] Interpersonal trust is built upon self-disclosure. Johnson states it thusly:

> Without self-disclosure you cannot form a close personal relationship with another person. A relationship between two individuals develops as the two become more open about themselves and more self-disclosing.[70]

There is a direct relationship between cooperation within a group and open, effective communication within it. Communication can be improved within a group by increasing the cooperative behavior of members. The reverse is also true--the development of open communications and the sharing of ideas within a group will increase the cooperative behavior of members and will help to develop group cohesion. David Johnson reports that

> a cooperative orientation leads to increased cohesiveness and greater group productivity. One sound means of improving the communication among group members is to increase their cooperativeness and decrease their competitiveness.[71]

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[69] Erving Goffman, The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Press), 1959.

[70] David W. Johnson, Reaching Out: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-Actualization (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prenctice-Hall, Inc.), 1972, pp. 8-9.

[71] David W. Johnson and Frank P. Johnson, Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc.), 1975. p. 125.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: COMMUNICATING

Communication is a two-way process consisting of a:	Sender Receiver
The sender:	Directs his or her message to a specific audience Uses a means of communication appropriate to the message Eliminates undesired hidden meanings from the message
The receiver:	Interprets the message Checks with the sender to verify the accuracy of his or her interpretation Acks for clarification if in doubt
Communication involves:	Speech Non-verbal messages Listening Analysis and interpretation

Communication is most effective in an atmosphere of trust and understanding--an environment of mutual self-disclosure.

PLANNING

HOW WELL DO YOU PLAN?

1. Below are nine planning skills. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Define the problem, need, or issue.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Identify likely solutions.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Develop goals related to the chosen solution.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Identify the tasks that must be accomplished in order to reach the goal.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Identify appropriate resources.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Anticipate and analyze potential barriers.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Devise and evaluate alternatives.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Attend to details.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Take into account political, economic, and logistical constraints.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some planning skills not listed above that you now do well _____

   _____

3. What planning skills do you need to learn? _____

   _____

PLANNING

PLANNING

A "plan" is a detailed program of action, and "planning" is the laying out of the route to achieve a goal, the specific means to the end. The goal in planning is to accomplish the following things:

- effective use of all resources (time, money, personnel, materials, etc.);
- assurance that people, materials, and equipment will be available when and where needed;
- successful attainment of goals within the limitations of time, money, or other resources; and
- prevention of mistakes or failure.

The cost of poor planning can be enormous: for an architect, it might mean a great deal of financial and personal suffering. For an educator it might mean learners who are thwarted, disenchanted, or "turned off" by poor materials or instructional techniques.

Planning is a continuous activity that stops only with the completion of the task or termination of the project. When overemphasized, however, planning for a given activity can use up so much time and resources that little is actually accomplished. If too little planning is hazardous, then so is too much planning. Overplanning can be such a drain on resources that it can cause a project to fail. But underplanning can lead to "tunnel vision"--unnecessary restriction of the task because of the limitations of time.

PLANNING

Throughout any project, evaluation should be conducted periodically, and hence must be planned in advance. The evaluation should also build on the plans made, since one of the goals of evaluation is to compare what actually occurred to what was planned.

Planning is a rational process in which an individual or a group:

- defines a problem, need or concern;
- identifies likely solutions;
- develops goals that will lead to the chosen solution(s);
- identifies the tasks to be accomplished;
- identifies appropriate resources (human, material, and economic);
- anticipates potential barriers to completing the tasks and reaching the goals; and
- devises and evaluates alternative strategies.

Identifying the problem and generating alternative solutions involves analysis. Problem analysis requires separating a problem into component parts and looking at them in detail. Since this requires information, problem analysis also includes collecting relevant information about the problem.

Basically, four areas of a problem should be considered when analyzing it: 1) the desired outcome; 2) the extent of the problem; 3) its causes; and 4) alternative solutions. Generating solutions to a given problem can be done by adopting existing materials or methods in their entirety, modifying or adapting them

to meet the particular situation, or inventing completely new materials or methods.

Although it is usually easy to spot a problem or need and state the desired outcome, it is often difficult to pinpoint exactly when the problem lies and specifically what is needed. Needs are often stated in vague terms, which the planner must restate very precisely. The problem or need should be described in terms of the following things:

1. target audience (size, age, socioeconomic and demographic characteristics, educational level, and any other information needed regarding the individuals and groups involved)
2. desired outcomes of solving the problem or addressing the need
3. current status
4. possible causes of the problem, including such factors as money, materials, procedures, structure or organization, or facilities and equipment

Because planning occurs on a continuum, as new information is discovered and tasks are completed the plans may have to be revised accordingly. Planning, however, should direct action, not preclude it.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: PLANNING

A plan is a detailed program of action to:

- Make use of all resources effectively
- Assure that people, materials, and equipment will be available when and where needed
- Achieve goals successfully within the limits of available resources
- Prevent mistakes or failure

Social action theorists consider planning a prerequisite to effective social action.

Planning is a process in which an individual or a group:

- Defines the problem, need, or concern
- Identifies likely solutions
- Develops goals that will lead to the chosen solutions
- Identifies the tasks to be accomplished
- Identifies appropriate human, material, and economic resources
- Anticipates potential barriers to completing the tasks and reaching goals
- Devises and evaluates alternative strategies

Plans should direct action, not preclude it.

ASSUMING AND SHARING LEADERSHIP

HOW WELL DO YOU ASSUME AND SHARE LEADERSHIP?

1. Below are nine skills needed to lead a group. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Facilitate communication by sharing information, soliciting ideas and information, and engaging all members of the group in discussion.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Facilitate communication by listening carefully, by ensuring that group members understand one another's points of view, and by preventing evaluative comments about members.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Help the group resolve conflicts by easing tension, building trust, working out disagreements among group members, blending together the work of different members, and suggesting compromises.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Facilitate work by starting, giving direction to, and recommending group rules and methods of organizing.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Bring together the results of the group's work by observing and offering explanations for group actions, ideas, and decisions, and by structuring solutions for the group.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Obtain the support and agreement of other members of the group.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Recognize when other members of the group are more skilled in specific areas and help them take the lead.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

HOW WELL DO YOU ASSUME AND SHARE LEADERSHIP? (continued)

- Help the group to evaluate its performance by analyzing 1) how closely it has come to achieving its desired ends and 2) the quality of what was accomplished.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Help the group to assess its work by recognizing when its efforts are not taking the group in the desired direction and by suggesting alternative courses of action.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some skills not listed above that you now do well.

_____

_____

3. What leadership skills do you need to acquire? _____

_____

_____

ASSUMING AND SHARING LEADERSHIP

ASSUMING AND SHARING LEADERSHIP

The ability to assume and to share leadership in small, task-oriented groups is essential for the development of group cohesiveness, for making the best use of resources, and for facilitating communication on a cooperative basis. The most difficult state to achieve is a good balance between directive leadership and the autonomy of the group.

The leadership role is made much more effective by group consensus on goals, tasks, timelines, and individual responsibilities. When members know what is to be done by the group and what is expected of each of them, they are able to contribute more to the group and to assume greater responsibility for leadership and for completion of tasks. Development of a thoughtful, detailed plan results in structured leadership (see pages 52-53). The leader can then assume a supportive role in which she/he facilitates the administrative and management competencies that must be fulfilled (assuming and sharing leadership, planning, using resources, solving problems and making decisions, and evaluation) while at the same time helping group members to use their interaction competencies (communicating, cooperating, and resolving conflicts).

Structured leadership eases the burden on the leader by encouraging members to assume the leadership role in areas in which the leader is less skilled. An effective leader knows when to

rely on the skills and judgment of others and when to rely on his or her own skills.

ASSUMING AND SHARING LEADERSHIP

Leadership functions include:

- facilitating work;
- facilitating communication;
- supporting group members in the completion of their tasks;
- eliciting and encouraging creative participation by all members;
- initiating, guiding, and coordinating the group's work;
- structuring solutions and facilitating decision making; acting as the decision maker when appropriate and necessary;
- helping the group to adapt to changing circumstances; and
- sharing leadership in order to aid the development of group cohesion and the completion of group tasks.

Any group member can and should fill the above functions at various times throughout the life of the group. Group members are not fulfilling their responsibilities if they rely on one person to perform all of the leadership functions at all times. When every member of the group shoulders at least partial responsibility for the leadership of the group, the membership forms a tightly knit, closely coordinated, and cooperative structure.

Leadership is based on power, which involves the ability to get someone to do something or to behave in a particular way. The use of power, which is in itself neither good nor bad, should be distinguished from manipulation, which is the misuse of power (i.e., the illegitimate or dishonest use of power to control

ASSUMING AND SHARING LEADERSHIP

others, often without their knowledge or consent, for one's own goals and profit and usually to the detriment of the other's well-being).

Power held by vitue of a position of authority may or may not be legitimate, depending on whether that position was obtained with the consent of the group. Power based on personal influence and expertise is more highly valued and considered more legitimate in contemporary society than it was one hundred years ago. The effectiveness of the power of an individual or individuals in a group depends not only on the amount of power but also on the amount of resistance from other group members. The least amount of resistance will result if 1) the members perceive that the power is being used for goals incompatible with their own or with group goals; or 2) members feel they are being manipulated or that the power has been illegitimately gained.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: ASSUMING AND SHARING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is more effective when the group has agreed on a plan of action.

Development of a plan that specifies goals, tasks, timelines, and individual responsibilities results in structured leadership.

Leadership functions include:

- Facilitating work
- Facilitating communication
- Supporting group members in the completion of their tasks
- Eliciting and encouraging creative participation by all members
- Guiding and coordinating the work of the group
- Facilitating decision making, including acting as the decision maker when necessary
- Helping the group to adapt to change
- Sharing leadership to develop group cohesion and to complete group tasks

---

Group cohesion and group cooperation are facilitated by shared leadership.

Leadership is based on power, which is the ability to get someone to do something or to behave in a particular way.

C O O P E R A T I N G

HOW WELL DO YOU COOPERATE?

1. Below are eight skills needed for working cooperatively in small, task-oriented groups. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Blend together the work of different parts of the group.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Observe the interaction of group members.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Perceive the causes of interpersonal problems.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Discuss and suggest group standards and goals.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Resolve conflicts.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Reassess your own position and meet others halfway.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Meet your commitments to the group.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Offer and accept quid pro quos.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some cooperative skills not listed above that you now do well. _____

   _____

3. What cooperative skills do you need to acquire? _____

   _____

   _____

COOPERATING

If the members of the group are willing to compromise, set aside minor differences of opinion, assist one another with their tasks, make realistic commitments and stick to them, and avoid personal attacks on each other, the group will be able to work together well enough to complete its job. If each member of the group is sufficiently concerned with maintaining the group and reaching the goals of the group, then members will sacrifice a certain degree of independence and selfness for the sake of the group.

The first step in cooperating is agreeing on a mutual purpose and goal. The second, frequently more difficult one, is concurring on the best means of reaching that goal. If the goal is of enough importance to the group, however, it will discover a way of resolving differences about how to reach its goal. In addition to overcoming differences of opinion and resolving conflicts of interest, the group must behave in other ways to facilitate cooperation. Members should:

- share information with one another;
- recognize each other's skills and abilities and make use of them;
- evaluate behavior rather than values; actions rather than the person;
- offer constructive criticism;
- avoid rejecting any suggestion out-of-hand without giving it thoughtful consideration;

COOPERATING

- appreciate the perspective and values of each member for the insight they can add to those of the entire group; and
- make and keep realistic commitments to the group.

Cooperation entails a willingness to offer and accept a quid pro quo. Such bargains, however, should be carried out in an atmosphere of trust, of understanding that there is not necessarily an expectation of an immediate return. In an atmosphere of cooperation each person does not need to be told what to do every step of the way. Rather, within the limits of the agreed-upon plan, group members observe what needs to be done and then do it. Each person's cooperative act can generate another, resulting in a strong sense of unity and cohesion.

The first step in fostering group cooperation is to blend together the work of different parts of the group. In so doing, the group should ask itself the following questions.

- What job has each person or each part of the group been working on?
- How do these jobs relate to one another?
- How does each of these jobs relate to the group goal?
- What ideas and information from each of these persons or parts of the group can we use? How should they be used?

The group should continuously monitor itself (as described in the section on EVALUATING, pages 113-118) to determine how well group members are cooperating and to improve the performance of the group throughout a task. When and if problems arise, the group

will have to try to discover their cause and generate possible solutions (see also PLANNING, pages 69-74, and SOLVING PROBLEMS AND MAKING DECISIONS, pages 102-112).

Group goals, which were discussed in PLANNING, need to be addressed in terms of standards or rules for achievement. Standards may be stated either as "do's" or as "don'ts." The kinds of questions the group should pose when setting standards include:

- What ways of working or behaving do we agree group members should follow?
- How do such standards relate to the goals of the group?
- How should the group respond to members who do not meet those standards?

One way in which individual members of a group can cooperate is to help each other do better work. This can be done most effectively in an atmosphere of openness and trust. Members can help each other:

- see reasons for what they are doing, which gives them motivation for working;
- share skills and resources;
- with praise for a job well done;
- suggest changes when problems or barriers to completing a task arise.

Finally, members can set good examples for one another. Those who are more skilled in a particular area can, by modeling the correct behavior, show others how to do it.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: COOPERATING

The first step in cooperating is agreeing upon a common purpose and goal. The second, frequently more difficult one, is concurring on the best means of reaching that goal.

Cooperating involves:	Overcoming differences of opinion and resolving conflicts of interest Sharing information Recognizing one another's skills and abilities and using them Offering constructive criticism Giving all suggestions thoughtful consideration Valuing the perspectives and values of other members Making and keeping realistic commitments to the group Offering and accepting quid pro quos
Fostering cooperation entails:	Blending together the work of different parts of the group Monitoring how well the group works together Identifying causes of problems Establishing group standards Helping one another do better work Setting a good example

IDENTIFYING AND USING RESOURCES

HOW WELL DO YOU USE RESOURCES?

1. Below are six skills needed to be able to identify and use resources in a task-oriented group. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Identify the resources needed to accomplish the tasks of the group.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Recognize the skills and knowledge of each member of the group.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Accurately assess your own skills and knowledge.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Match skills and knowledge to tasks perceptively.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Enlist the aid of outside resources.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Maximize the available resources with training and by pairing members with complementary skills.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some skills in using resources not listed above that you now do well. _____

   _____

   _____

3. What skills do you need to learn? _____

   _____

   _____

IDENTIFYING AND USING RESOURCES

USING RESOURCES

The group needs to be able to draw upon four basic types of resources: technical, group maintenance, material, and financial resources. Group members will be more adept at some than others.

Technical resources include those skills and knowledge needed for direct completion of tasks--e.g., substantive knowledge, writing skills, mechanical ability, etc. Group maintenance resources are those abilities required to keep the group together: resolving conflicts, facilitating communication, and fostering cooperation. Financial resources are required to provide the material resources (tools, job aids, guides, etc.) that are needed to carry out group tasks.

Basically, there are several stages to using resources:

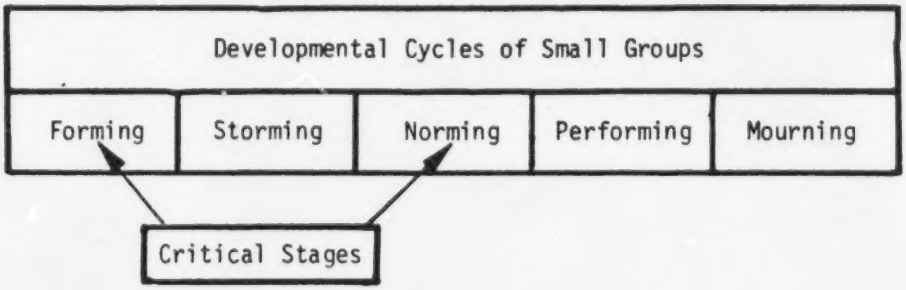
1. identifying the resources needed to complete each task;
2. identifying the skills and knowledge of each member;
3. matching tasks to resources, i.e., assigning individual responsibility;
4. recognizing when the group does not have sufficient resources within its membership; and
5. securing outside resources as necessary.

There are a variety of resources to be considered including wealth, prestige, technical skill, communications skills, knowledge, physical strength, respect, accomplishment, and warmth of personality. Others include organizational ability, self-discipline and self-direction, and energy. Particular resources are needed in particular situations. Each group member should be allowed to use his or her resources to the advantage of the group

and thus to derive satisfaction for their efforts.

USING RESOURCES

The models of group activities developed by Tuckman and by Argyle show a minimum of four recurring patterns.[72] The general model (slightly modified by Argyle) has been adapted as shown below.



[Adapted from Thomas Dolgoff, "Small Groups and Organizations: Time, Task and Sentient Boundaries," General Systems, Vol. XX (1975), p. 135]

The above illustration shows the critical stages at which the possession of relevant information can be transformed quickly into social power for a member of the group. During the first three stages the group is organizing physically (forming); establishing purposes and goals and defining the task by sharing information (storming); and developing standards (norming). Resources are needed for planning, for establishing an information base, and

72 B.W. Tuckman, "Developmental Sequence in Small Groups," Psychological Bulletin, 63: 384-399 (1965); Martin Argyle, The Social Psychology of Work (New York: The Penguin Press), 1972.

for maintaining the group. The latter is the responsibility of the group facilitators who help to communicate the importance of each member to the accomplishment of the goals of the group.

USING RESOURCES

REVIEW/SUMMARY: IDENTIFYING AND USING RESOURCES

Groups need four types of resources:	Technical Group Maintenance Material Financial
Using resources involves:	Identifying the resources needed Identifying the skills and knowledge of each member Matching tasks to resources and assigning individual responsibility Recognizing when external resources are needed Securing external resources
Resources include:	
Technical resources:	Substantive knowledge Writing skills Mechanical ability
Group maintenance resources:	Resolving conflicts Facilitating communication Fostering communication
Material resources:	Tools Job aids Guides
Financial resources	

RESOLVING

CONFLICTS

HOW WELL DO YOU RESOLVE CONFLICTS?

1. Below are six skil's needed to resolve conflicts and to settle differences of opinion. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Distinguish between a conflict of interest and a difference of opinion.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Analyze the root cause of the conflict.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Resolve differences of opinion resulting from misinterpretations by restating viewpoints of others.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Suggest compromise solutions to conflicts.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Accept compromise solutions in order to resolve conflicts.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Use differences of opinion as catalysts for generating ideas and for devising alternative strategies.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some conflict resolution skills not listed above that you now do well. _____

   _____

3. What skills do you need to acquire? _____

   _____

   _____

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

There are five general causes of group conflicts: (1) goals and tasks; (2) personality conflicts; (3) organizational structure; (4) personal problems; and (5) societal conditions.

The group task. The goals of the group may not be in tune with the goals of individual members. The task may be difficult or impossible to complete. The time schedule for completion may be unrealistic or the group may be unable to meet the deadline. The task may require skills and resources not available. Individual members may be incompetent or inefficient in accomplishing the task. Failure at task completion may involve firing, or at least negative evaluation, of individuals. The task may be defined or structured so loosely or tightly as to cause job dissatisfaction and lack of productivity. The nature of task components and the division of roles or sub-tasks may be a source of destructive competition among the individuals in the group.

Group interpersonal relations. Value and goal differences among group members may hinder cooperative effort and individual adjustment. Lack of communication, miscommunication, and labeling or stereotyping can aggravate individual and group relationships. Personality differences may result in attitudes and behaviors that disrupt the work of the group and the group's working relationship. Gossiping, back-biting, fault-finding, aggressive confrontation, aloofness, mistrust, suspicion, exaggeration of

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

differences, manipulation of others, vindictiveness, favoritism, petty jealousies, and rivalries are all symptoms of poor human relations.

The group environment and the organizational structure. An overly hierarchical structure may contribute to lack of input to goal definition and goal attainment by subordinate members of the group. An overly permissive structure may leave the group and its members without clear goals, adequate direction, and standards for efficiency and productivity. Both hierarchical and laissez-faire structures may impair the ability of the group to react swiftly to external pressures, or to discern what the situation is. This may negatively affect the motivation of group members to perform adequately and to maintain the unity of the group.

Lack of communication between leaders and other group members, as well as with other levels or branches of the larger organization, may cause unnecessary confusion, frustration, alienation, resentment, and failure to air opinions, feelings, constructive criticism, and suggestions for improvement. The division of labor may cause boredom, promote a sense of powerlessness, and stifle creativity and the full utilization of human resources. Policies and procedures may hinder rather than facilitate effective communication, healthy interpersonal relationships, decision making and problem solving, and needed input from all members. Inadequate or oppressive working conditions and facilities may adversely affect productivity, individual development, and satisfaction. Impersonal

environments may depress job outcomes as well as lessen commitment. Promotion procedures may not reward members sufficiently and may hold back or fail to recognize individuals whose talents are being wasted. Policies and procedures may reward conformity and mediocre performance while discouraging innovations and independent thinking.

Individual personal problems. A lack of self-confidence or a sense of self-worth may affect the ability of an individual to contribute to the job and to interpersonal harmony. Personal conflict may be reflected in attitudes and behaviors characterized by poor self-concept, anxiety, withdrawal, a sense of failure and inadequacy, depression, discontent, inefficiency, a feeling of oppression, lack of flexibility, a general lack of motivation and cooperation, and chronic tardiness and absenteeism.

Societal conditions. Racial, religious, ethnic, political, and sex discrimination in attitudes and practices within the larger society may exclude individuals from participation in the work group, or restrict their participation, through hiring practices, stereotyping, prejudiced statements and behaviors, and unequal treatment. Tensions and resentment may flare into aggressive, divisive confrontation. Separatist cliques and intolerant individuals may disrupt the accomplishment of tasks and the unity of the group.

It must be kept in mind that the above distinctions may not be useful in a given situation since a conflict may be the result of several factors.

RESOLVING CONFLICTS

There is a difference between constructive and destructive conflict. The conflicts described above are examples of destructive conflict, which often occurs in matters that are so involved with basic values or emotions that resolution becomes impossible. Constructive conflict occurs in situations that are resolvable and that result in greater individual and group understanding and cohesion. Group consensus is rare, since consensus implies agreement among all members. Conflicts usually can be resolved through some process that results in a compromise, or the acceptance of an alternative by all members, although everyone may not agree with all aspects of the compromise.

The resolution of conflicts requires the involvement of all members of the group in a process that makes them aware of the situation, seeks to analyze the source of the conflict, and devises solutions. This process, which is very similar to other problem-solving and decision-making processes, is called the "triple-A way."

Awareness

1. Recognizing that something is wrong.
2. Assuming personal responsibility for the problem.
3. Seeking the interests and beliefs (relevant to the problem) of other group members.

Analysis

1. Determining the cause of the conflict.
2. Devising potential solutions and alternatives.
3. Identifying necessary resources for carrying out the solutions.
4. Accurately identifying the probable outcome of various solutions, thus being able to identify the "best" ones.

Action

1. Selecting the solution that will solve the problem, is feasible, and is acceptable to the group.
2. Dividing the work that must be done to implement the solution.
3. Taking action.
4. Assessing the effectiveness of the solution.
5. Taking corrective action if necessary.

Tjosvold stresses the value of openness--the direct and valid exchange of ideas, opinions, and feelings--in the resolution of conflicts and improvement of the decision-making capabilities of the group. "Without it," he states, "many of the advantages of conflict for improving decision-making are unrealized. With open exchange, more information, ideas, and creative solutions are generated that contribute to effective decision-making."[73]

Knowledge of the causes of conflicts, when they are likely to occur, and methods for resolving them will help to increase group cohesion and productivity instead of destroying the group.

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[73]Dean Tjosvold, "Cooperation and Conflict Between Administrators and Teachers," Journal of Research and Development in Education (Fall 1978), 12(1):138-148.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: RESOLVING CONFLICTS

There are five general causes of group conflicts:	Goals and tasks Personality conflicts Organizational structure Personal problems Societal conditions
Conflicts can be resolved through:	Awareness Analysis Action
Conflicts are likely to erupt during the group's:	Infancy (over leadership) Youth (about group autonomy) Adulthood (over group control) Maturity (over red tape) Mourning (about its future)

Conflicts can be constructive when members are able to solve them by discovering their cause, agreeing on compromise, and implementing group decisions.

MAKING DECISIONS
AND
SOLVING PROBLEMS

HOW WELL DO YOU MAKE DECISIONS AND SOLVE PROBLEMS?

1. Below are twelve skills needed to make decisions and solve problems. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

Making Decisions

- Recognize decisions that need to be made, including when they must be made.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Identify and acquire information about alternative choices or options.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Predict the possible outcomes of various choices.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Estimate and weigh the probability and desirability of those outcomes.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Relate personal values and goals to decisions that must be made.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Accept responsibility for decisions made.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Know the seven ways to make group decisions and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

Solving Problems

- Define problems by identifying needs or discrepancies between what is and what should be.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Use a variety of sources and techniques to gather data about the problem.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Identify or generate alternative solutions.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Anticipate the probable consequences and costs of various solutions.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

- Choose or combine solutions based on their desirability and feasibility.

  very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some decision-making or problem-solving skills not listed above that you now do well. _____

   _____

3. What skills do you need to acquire? _____

   _____

   _____

MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

Making decisions and solving problems in the context of a group involves two major considerations: (1) the process, and (2) the actors.

The Process

To decide means to "arrive at a solution [an answer] that ends uncertainty or dispute" about an issue.[74] To solve means to "find a solution [an answer] for" a problem.[75] The distinction between the two terms is real, although subtle. It rests largely with the implication that problems have single solutions--once considered a fact of life and now widely disputed by researchers, politicians, students of social problems, and policy analysts. Perhaps the real distinction lies in the need to decide among possible solutions when solving problems.

The processes are also very similar. An effective decision-making process entails:

- recognizing the decisions that need to be made and knowing when they must be made;
- identifying and acquiring information about alternative choices or options;
- predicting the possible outcomes of various options;

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74 Henry Bosley Woolf, Editor in Chief, Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Massachusetts: G & C. Merriam Company), 1977, page 293.

75 Ibid, p. 1107.

- estimating and weighing the probability and desirability of potential outcomes;
- relating personal values and goals to decisions that must be made; and
- selecting the alternative that conforms to personal values and goals.

An effective problem-solving process involves:

- defining problems by assessing needs or identifing discrepancies between the current and desired status;
- using a variety of information sources and techniques to gather data about the problem;
- identifying and generating alternative solutions;
- anticipating the probable consequences and costs of various solutions; and
- choosing or combining solutions based on their desirability and political, economic, and logistical feasibility.

The Actors

Decisions the group must carry out can be made by one or more members, depending on the nature of the decision, when it must be made, and the availability of members to participate in the decision-making process. The actors involved in the process can range from the leader alone to the entire group, with variations in between those two extremes.

Decisions made by the leader. In situations where time is short, information cannot be shared, the decision is routine or simple, or group members cannot be gathered to participate in the process, it may be best for the leader to make the decision alone. However, unless the group members participate in the decision, or

MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

are fully informed about the options considered before the choice was made and concur with the results, they will not have a sense of ownership in the decision and may not fully support its implementation. If the group does not have to implement the decision, this may not present problems. Otherwise, it is best to involve as many members in the decision process as time and circumstances allow or the decision may be negated during implementation by the group.

If the leader does not make the decision, either with or without input from group members, then the decision may be made by:

- a single member of the group selected for his or her expertise in the matter at hand;
- a sub-group of the whole, such as a committee under whose domain the decision falls; several members expert in the area in question; or an informal association of members who raise the question;
- an outside expert or panel of experts; or
- the whole group.

Decisions made by an expert member. Allowing the most expert member of the group to make a decision can be effective if there is consensus regarding the individual and his or her capabilities. However, experts often disagree in their interpretations of events, issues and correct courses of action; therefore, unless the group has complete confidence in the expertise of their member, or unless the decision is not overly complex, it might be preferable to rely on the expert for advice while leaving the decision to ei

the whole group or the leader.

MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

Decisions made by a minority. Using a sub-group to make certain decisions is useful when the whole group is large and has a great deal to accomplish. Thus, sub-groups can be established to become knowledgeable in particular areas and to make decisions with regard to related matters. If members volunteered for such sub-groups, or if they were appointed by the whole group or by the leader with the group's consensus, this method is especially effective. On the other hand, if a committee decision is made by "railroading," the rest of the group will undoubtedly feel resentful and may refuse to help carry out the decision.

Decisions made by an outsider. The use of an outside expert or panel of experts can be useful in situations where the group is confused or where there is a deadlock with regard to a particular decision. Outsiders can provide a fresh perspective and can help the group to consider alternatives that might not have occurred to them. However, the experts brought in must have the trust of all the members. If the outsiders are believed to favor one side over another they will only exacerbate the situation rather than helping to resolve it. It may be preferable to use outside experts as advisors rather than decision makers so that the group retains responsibility for the outcome of their decision.

Decisions made by the majority. The group can make a decision by voting (with or without discussion, depending on the nature of the decision), or by group consensus. If the decision is to be

MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

made by simple majority vote, the group may talk until it finds a decision that is supported by more than half of the members. Or someone may simply propose an option on which the group can vote. Majority decisions work well when decisions must be made quickly but need more input than just that of the leader. They also work well when the whole group needs to participate, but the group is too large or too divided to reach a consensus.

Decisions made by group consensus. The difference between a decision by consensus and one by majority vote is that the former implies harmony and the latter numerical weight. A consensus decision may in fact be the result of a majority vote, but each member of the group feels that he or she had an opportunity to express his or her ideas and opinions and that each idea was considered carefully and thoughtfully before a final decision was made.

Consensus decisions require considerable time to make since preliminary decisions must be tried before a final one is agreed upon. They also demand a high level of group interaction skills from members. If members take positions without listening to opposing viewpoints, frustrations will build and no agreements will be reached. Or if members are too willing to compromise or relinquish their positions to keep peace, they may harbor buried hostility that could rise to the surface when the decision is being implemented. However, if members use their interaction skills effectively to concur on a matter, that decision is likely

to be well made according to the decision-making process described above as well as to have the full support of all members of the group.

MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

REVIEW/SUMMARY: MAKING DECISIONS AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

Making decisions and solving problems are processes that can involve a variety of actors.

The decision-making and problem-solving processes are very similar. Both entail:

- Recognition and definition
- Acquisition of information
- Determination of alternatives
- Analysis of costs, benefits, and probable outcomes
- Choice among alternatives

Actors in group decision making and problem solving may include:

- The leader alone
- An expert member
- A minority of the group
- An outsider
- A majority of the group
- The group (by consensus)

Decision making and problem solving by group consensus is the lengthiest and most difficult method, but offers group members the greatest potential for satisfaction and group support of the decision, and may increase cohesion and productivity.

EVALUATING

HOW WELL DO YOU EVALUATE?

1. Below are seven skills needed to evaluate the performance and products of an individual or a group. Circle the phrase that best describes how well you can do each one.

   - Develop criteria for judging degrees of success.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Determine what actually happened.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Measure learning outcomes.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Measure outcomes of events or activities.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Compare outcomes to goals as developed during planning stage.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Draw conclusions regarding causal relations between events and outcomes.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

   - Make recommendations for future action.

     very poorly poorly adequately well

2. Name some evaluation skills not listed above that you now do well. _____

   _____

   _____

3. What evaluation skills do you need to learn? _____

   _____

   _____

EVALUATING

EVALUATING

The primary purpose of evaluation is to facilitate decision making. Evaluation can also be used to:

- assess needs;
- rate programs, organizations, activities, or products;
- judge the performance of individuals and that of the group;
- justify funding; or
- make budget decisions.

Although the evaluation process may be used for many purposes, the following steps should be observed in all its applications:

1. Define the purpose of the evaluation.
2. Determine the kinds of information to be collected.
3. Collect and analyze the data.
4. Draw conclusions from the data.
5. Make recommendations or decisions.

Most successful evaluations build on previously developed plans. The process involves comparing what actually occurred, and the results of those events, with what was intended. Therefore, it is very important that the group develop carefully considered plans with goals and objectives on which all members concur. It may happen, and does frequently when products are being developed, that what was originally thought to be the best goal is modified, sometimes considerably. Such changes in plans, however, should

EVALUATING

be done with forethought and with supporting evidence to justify the changes made. That evidence should come from evaluation data collected in accordance with an evaluation plan.

There are two primary types of evaluation: formative and summative. Formative evaluation focuses on on-going events, activities, and the development of products in an attempt to improve their performance while they occur or are being developed. If the group is interested in learning how well it is working, on a day-to-day procedural basis, it should collect information about group procedures, individual roles and responsibilities, and the activities of the group to determine whether any changes could or should be instituted to improve group operations. If the group is developing a product of some kind--a film, for example--it might show the film to a few people who have been carefully selected according to some previously determined criteria, to obtain information about how well the film conveys its intended message. Both approaches are examples of formative evaluation.

Summative evaluation focuses on the outcomes and impact of the activity, program, or product. Thus, if the group is interested in finding out whether it in fact accomplished what it set out to do, or whether it had the impact on other people and organizations that was intended, group members will need to collect information that demonstrates the outcome and products of the activities of the group.

EVALUATING

There are a variety of ways in which evaluation data can be collected. The group can keep records of its activities: minutes of meetings, records of individual responsibilities, schedules and deadlines, letters and memos, notes from meetings, written plans, etc. Each member can be responsible for observing a particular aspect of the work of the group, such as communications, particular tasks, conflict resolution, and the assumption of leadership roles by members. Observation notes also can be incorporated into the data analysis and evaluation report.

Each member could prepare self-evaluations on each of the competencies at several points during the course of the group's life. These may or may not be shared with the group, according to the consensus of the group. Group members may wish to develop individual plans for improving their skill level with each of the competencies and to use those plans for assessing their development of skills.

Remember that the kind of information collected and the way in which it is collected should relate directly to the purposes of the evaluation being conducted. The information gathered and the conclusions drawn are of limited use unless they provide information pertinent to the decisions that must be made on the basis of the data.

REVIEW/SUMMARY: EVALUATING

The primary purpose of evaluation is to facilitate decision making.

The evaluation process should include:

- Defining its purpose
- Determining the kinds of information to be collected
- Collecting and analyzing data
- Drawing conclusions
- Making recommendations or decisions

Most successful evaluations build on previously developed plans, comparing what happened with what was intended.

There are two primary types of evaluation:

- Formative
- Summative

Formative evaluation focuses on on-going events and activities, and the development of products to improve them while they are being developed.

Summative evaluation focuses on the outcomes and impact of the activity, program, or product.

The information gathered and the conclusions drawn should relate to the decisions that need to be made.

FORM A GROUP

Form a Planning and Implementation Group for a generic work skills curriculum to be implemented in your school. The purpose for establishing this group is twofold: (1) to help you develop and use a generic work skills curriculum for students; and (2) to provide you (and the other members) with an opportunity to practice and improve your own generic work skills.

Recruit group members who are interested in the curriculum and who can contribute to the work of the group. As part of the recruitment and selection process, have each potential member read this module and complete the three preceding activities ("Name Your Groups," "Analyze Your Groups," and "Identify and Assess Your Generic Work Skills"). You are responsible for deciding how large the group will be (preferred size for task-oriented groups is 3 to 7 members), but allow potential members to make their own decisions about participating in the group.

Individuals who decide to participate in the group will, as their first task, complete each competency assessment instrument ("How Well Do You....?"). When the group has completed its work and is ready to implement the curriculum, each member will re-assess his or her competency in each of the eight areas and will assess the competency of every other member. Be sure that no member reviews his or her first self-assessment until AFTER the second one has been completed. Ratings should be compared for

each member, extreme differences discussed, and evidence of growth discussed and recorded. Use this information to decide which competencies, if any, each member needs to improve before using the curriculum with students.

APPENDIX:

KEY HYPOTHESES ABOUT SMALL GROUPS

and

A ROLE PLAYING PROBLEM CASE

This appendix contains the following things:

- *A summary list of key hypotheses from the module about small group interaction, followed by a discussion of some of the major, larger-scale theories on small group interaction that are not covered in the module.* It is hoped that this information will help the reader to summarize, for clarity, some of the major beliefs or hypotheses contained in the module, as well as to see the overall picture of how these hypotheses fit into the major theories of sociologists on small group interaction.
- *An activity entitled "A Role Playing Problem Case."* The activity can be used to enable users of the module to apply the skills they have learned (the generic work skills) in an actual group learning situation. The activity also encourages learners to become keen observers of what is occurring during each interaction within a group, and to interpret their observations according to the hypotheses of group theorists.

KEY HYPOTHESES ABOUT SMALL GROUPS

The following list is a summary of the key hypotheses on group theory contained in this module. Following each hypothesis, in brackets, is the page in the module on which the hypothesis can be found, and the author of the hypothesis. If there is no author listed, the statement was written by the authors of this module.

1. As the size of the group increases, individual members have fewer opportunities to talk. [p. 20, from Bales and Strodtbeck (1951)]

2. Role differentiation, role specialization, number of leaders, and number of cliques tend to increase in direct proportion to group size. [p. 21, from Thomas and Fink (1963)]

3. In traditional settings, when students are allowed to form groups based on their own choice, "friendly relations" increase. [pp. 22-23 from Hallinan and Tuma (1978)]

4. Members with prior information relative to the problem (1) entered the discussion earlier; (2) initiated more task-oriented communications; (3) had their suggestions accepted more frequently; and (4) were rated by others as contributing more to the tasks than members with no such prior knowledge. [p. 24, from Benne and Sheates (1948)]

5. Individuals who occupied central positions in laboratory experiments with groups were more likely to be active, to lead, and to be more satisfied with their job than other members. [pp. 24-25, from Bavelas (1958)]

6. Over time, differences between groups structured as "circles" and those organized as "wheels" disappear. [p. 26, from Secord and Backman (1974)]

7. Increased frequency of interaction within the group will stabilize positive sentiments towards one another. [p. 27, from Hallinan and Tuma (1978)]

8. Freedom of choice among acquaintances facilitates friendship. [p. 27, from Hallinan and Tuma (1978)]

9. When people are cooperatively interdependent they will develop an attraction to one another. [p. 27, from Deutsch (1949)]

10. Symbiotic relationships provide a more stable basis for attraction than do consensual ones. [p. 29, from Gross (1956)]

11. In order to solve problems or carry out tasks, a group must have the requisite skills and knowledge (or know where and how to get them); it must exchange information among members; and it must work together as a unit. [p. 29]

12. The ability of a group to solve problems or carry out tasks will directly affect its ability to set goals, to resolve conflicts, to identify and use resources, and to evaluate its work. [p. 30]

13. In order to avoid the stress of contradictory demands, roles should be unambiguously defined, properly matched with an individual's status, and suited to the personal interests and skills of the group member. [p. 31, from Adams (1953) and Kahn, et al. (1964)]

14. A democratic style of leadership is no less productive or "efficient" than an authoritarian one. [p. 46, from White and Lippitt (1968)]

15. Group members gain more satisfaction from a democratic style of leadership than from laissez-faire or authoritarian styles. [p. 46, from White and Lippitt (1968)]

16. There are significant differences between democratic and laissez-faire leadership. [p. 46, from White and Lippitt (1968)]

17. Authoritarian leadership can result in hostility and dissatisfaction, not all of which may be expressed. [p. 46, from White and Lippitt (1968)]

18. Democratic leadership encourages self-direction, "friendliness" and a strong sense of group, while authoritarian leadership fosters dependence and conformity. [p. 46, from White and Lippitt (1968)]

19. Followers' authoritarian or autocratic behavior elicits from the leader a style to match. [p. 47, from Crowe, Bochner and Clark (1972)]

20. If the demands placed by followers upon a leader are "too great," they may cause "resistance" (such as more autocratic behavior to control the group). [pp. 47-48, from Hollander (1978)]

21. The most effective leadership style is one that uses structure as both a means of accomplishing tasks and a method of effecting interaction. [p. 48, from Stogdill (1974)]

After reviewing the list of hypotheses stated above, it might be instructive to deal a bit more systematically with some of the major, larger-scale theories that bear on small group interaction. One of the most basic is that of Festinger (1954) known as "A Theory of Social Comparison Processes."[76] He states several explicit hypotheses about the underlying process of influence on opinions held by members of a small group. He states that people are motivated to evaluate their opinions and abilities. The only source of evaluation is in the reactions of others and not in some objective standards (unless one happens to be available). People will compare themselves with others who are similar to themselves rather than with others who are quite different.[77]

Schachter (1951) tested a few hypotheses about stooges in interaction with naive subjects in small groups. One stooge played the role of slider (who disagreed with the group's position at first but gradually shifted his position until he was modal at the end). The deviate stooge disagreed with the group's position throughout the meeting. They discussed a story about a delinquent youth. Some hypotheses that were supported by the study were: (1) Communication was directed toward the deviate and slider to change their positions. (2) This effect was greater in high-cohesiveness groups than in low-cohesiveness groups, and greater in groups of high relevance than in groups of low relevance. (3) The slider was not rejected by members of the group, but the deviate was.[78]

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[76] Leon Festinger, "A Theory of Social Comparison Processes," Human Relations (1954), 7:117-140.

[77] Clovis R. Shepherd, Small Groups, Some Sociological Perspectives (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co.), 1964, p. 47.

[78] Shepherd, Small Groups, pp. 75-76.

A very typical central hypothesis in the group dynamics tradition is a similar one--the more cohesive the group, the more likely it is to influence its members toward conformity, through a communication process. The result will probably be greater conformity in democratic groups in the end, somewhat less in authoritarian-led groups (except surface conformity), and least in laissez-faire control.

Homans (1950) makes the distinction between the internal system (interaction between members themselves) and the external system (interaction between the group or its members and outside persons and groups). He also tries to reduce his consideration of variables within small groups to as small a number as possible, focusing mainly on three concepts: activity (movements, action, work, things people do to or with objects or people when their reactions are ignored); interaction (behavior directed toward another person when his/her reaction or reciprocal behavior is taken into account); and sentiments (attitudes or beliefs that constitute the inner state of the person, subjective perceptions, and the like).[79]

Homans developed more than forty hypotheses centering on these three concepts in the course of analyzing five case studies of small groups. Three central ones are: (1) "Both motives and associated activities persist, both continuously recreated, but if either side of the relationship is changed, the other will be affected."[80] (2) "If the scheme of activities is changed, the scheme of interaction will, in general, change also, and vice versa."[81]

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[79] Shepherd, Small Groups, pp. 36f.

[80] George C. Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.), 1950, p. 99.

[81] Homans, The Human Group, p. 102.

and (3) "Interaction and positive sentiments (friendliness) are directly related."[82]

In his later work, Homans became more of a stimulus-response behaviorist in the tradition of B. F. Skinner, the operant behaviorist psychologist.[83] His propositions deal more with motivations of individuals than with group behavior as such. He is said to have left the field of sociology and entered into the discipline of psychology. In any event, six hypotheses seem to be central to his later work:[84]

1. Activity is directly related to the similarity of a stimulus situation to a past stimulus situation in which activity was rewarded.

2. Activity and reward are directly related.

3. The relation between activity and reward is enhanced by the presence of value, and reduced by the presence of satiation.

4. Activity and cost are inversely related. [This is the basis of social exchange theory.]

5. The relation between activity and cost is reduced by value, and enhanced by satiation.

6. The presence of alternative activities is increased sharply by the introduction of a third person into a two-person situation, such that satiation becomes much less likely to occur or to affect activity.

George Simmel, another general theorist who is a classical sociologist, set forth a provocative hypothesis that seems to turn reason on its head--conflict has positive functions. It is important to realize that this will happen only if the rules of confrontation are properly followed, if there is

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[82]Homans, The Human Group.

[83]See, for example, George C. Homans, Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms, rev. ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich), 1974.

[84]Shepherd, Small Groups, pp. 44-45.

empathic understanding between the contending parties, and if there is integrated bargaining. In that case there can be positive outcomes, in the form of greater productivity as well as greater emotional sharing among the members of the group or the parties to the relationship.[85]

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[85]George Simmel, Conflict, trans. Kurt. H. Wolff (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press), 1955.

A ROLE PLAYING PROBLEM CASE

1. If there are more than six participants, four should be in the inner circle of on-the-spot participants; two or more should be observers, viewing the interaction from an outer circle. In any case, there should be at least two non-participating observers of the interaction.
2. Everyone, observers and participants alike, should set up some notebook paper in two-column format in order to keep notes on the group experience both as it proceeds and afterwards. Basically, they should record an informational description of what happens in the interaction in the left column. Later, in the right column, they should try to interpret the experiences in terms of concepts, theories and hypotheses expounded and defined elsewhere in this module (referring to page numbers in this module).
3. Observers only may keep a check list.[86]
4. The discussion itself (lasting about 15 minutes) should be taped for later playback and analysis by individuals and the group as a whole.
5. A suitable problem situation should be chosen for discussion.[87]

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[86] For an example of a suitable check list, see the "Group Process Observer Report Form," in J. William Pfeiffer and John E. Jones, eds., Handbook of Structured Experience for Human Relations Training, 6 volumes (La Jolla: University Associates Press), 1969-1977.

[87] For some ideas, the following resources could be consulted: "Introducing Simulation with Simulation: Participative Decision-Making," in Robert E. Horn, The Guide to Simulations/Games for Education and Training, 3rd ed. (Cranford, NJ: Didactic Systems), 1977, pp. 528-532; "Observation of a Small Group," in Victor Baldridge, ACTION: An Experiential Approach to Sociology, Teacher's Manual (New York: Wiley), 1975, pp. 109-111; and "The Moon Game," in Baldridge, ACTION, pp. 52-55.

6. The situation should be presented to the participants, who arrange their chairs in a circle or around a conference table.
7. Inner-circle participants should begin the role-playing scene. They should be allowed (depending on the scene) twenty minutes or more, with a five-minute warning before the end of the allotted time. The tape should be running.
8. Observers should take notes in the left column of their journals. Participants of the inner circle should jot down topics, phrases, and reminders so they may complete their analysis after the session is completed.
9. After the scene is completed, at least seven minutes should be allowed for observers and participants to fill in (with as much detail as possible) who, what happened, when, why, how, etc. in the left column of their journals.
10. Take five minutes to discuss with everyone what they observed. Fill in any new items in your journals, in the left column (ideally in a different color pen).
11. Play back the tape to check the accuracy of ideas and entries into your journal (20 minutes).
12. Discuss other ideas learned from the tape which were not noted before (5 minutes).
13. Exchange journals with one other participant or observer of the scene. On a separate piece of paper, critique in writing your partner's journal. (15 minutes) (This could also be done in pencil in the left margin of the left column.)

14. Debrief and evaluate the whole experience orally (15 minutes).
15. Take your own journal home and try to evaluate the experiences recorded in terms of small group theory in the right column.
16. At your next group meeting, exchange journals with a partner. Write a critique of the right column analyses in pencil and on separate pages. (15 minutes)
17. Discuss alternate interpretations and analyses given by different participants, different observers, and different journal writers. (20 minutes)
18. Repeat the above experience with different scenes, different participants, and different observers on three occasions until you become practiced at describing as well as theoretically analyzing small group interaction.

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